

TJ Hughes' opening boosts shopping figures by a third

JOY AS CENTRE'S FOOTFALL SOARS

Repot by Jordan Harris

BOSSES at the Saddlers Shopping Centre are brimming with delight this week after new figures show that weekly trips have rocketed by almost a third after the opening of a new discount store.

The centre had an average 130,000 visitors each week before the new T J Hughes store opened its doors.

But following the store opening on October 8, shopping centre bosses claim footfall has dramatically increased.

Topland, which owns the site, said an extra 40,000 extra people were now visiting the centre. Steve Pope, asset director for the firm, said: "When we purchased the centre back in February 2013, our plan was to give the Saddlers Centre's loyal customers a better shopping experience, with greater choice and diversity.

"We are pleased with the progress we have made at the scheme during the year, especially the new let to T J Hughes.

"Everyone involved with the scheme has worked hard to deliver this plan and Topland's intensive management style has paid off.

"Footfall has increased by an average of 40,000 per week up until the end of October from a very healthy average level of 130,000 people per week."

Increase

Since taking over the centre, the operators also launched a food hub, bringing in Burger King. Mr Pope said he hoped to further expand the food hall next year.

The figures come just weeks after the Old Square Shopping Centre saw its visitors numbers increase following the opening of Primark.

It follows a critical report from the Local Data Company, which said around 28 per cent of shop units were empty in Walsall.

The Saddlers has just one of the 46 units inside the shopping centre currently empty.

Councillor Adrian Andrew, Walsall Council deputy leader, said: "What Topland have done to the Saddlers Centre is absolutely brilliant. They have really put an emphasis on it and made it one of the places to be in Walsall.

"With the departure of Argos, things could have gone badly wrong but they have bounced back and getting T J Hughes in appears to be a master stroke.

"The footfall figures are great news for the Saddlers Centre and for Walsall as a town and they are a testament to the good work put in by Topland. There are hardly any empty units on site, which is relatively unheard of these days."

PUPILS KICK OFF NEW PLAYGROUND AFTER GRANT



Goalkeeper Neil Etheridge, with pupils Sophie Freeman, Masie Walker, Ben Beddow, Ben Copley, Kartar Singh and Saddlers mascot Swifty

A WALSALL primary school has unveiled its new £30,000 playground after becoming one of the first to benefit from £18 million of National Lottery money.

Walsall goalkeeper Neil Etheridge joined Sport England and other guests at Walsall Wood School for the opening of the new facility. The school received £30,000 of National Lottery funding from Sport England's Primary Spaces fund to transform its playground into a useful space for PE and sport.

The school's sports co-ordinator Simon Bailey said: "Now the playground is marked and

prepared for a multitude of sports and games ranging from hockey and netball to basketball and cricket. A special plastic flooring has also been put down to make it safer."

New facilities at the 210-pupil school now include a net and hoop, and new polymer surfacing and court markings allowing teachers to increase PE curriculum time. The school hopes to engage and inspire more children to choose sport outside of school hours and 'find a love for being active', said the school's sports co-ordinator.

Sport England director of community sport

Mike Diaper added: "When launching this fund, we knew there were currently many primary schools that had little or no suitable outdoor space for PE or sport, making it difficult for teachers to deliver exciting and engaging lessons.

"That is why this funding is so important because it gives young people the right places to play sport and be physically active which is crucial to their development. By giving children the space to take part in PE and play sport from an early age, we can help them establish a lifelong sporting habit."

CLOSURE

Families are warned after Kiddisave sinks

FAMILIES left out of pocket after the sudden closure of a children's shop in Walsall have been warned they may not get their money back.

A meeting has been called between creditors after Kiddisave shut and went into liquidation. The site in Green Lane, Walsall, shut suddenly on Wednesday after trading since 1998.

Families have been left trying to get back hundreds of pounds they spent on goods from the shop that they have not received.

A statement issued by Kay Possart of Mayfield Insolvency Practitioners reads: "Mayfields have been instructed to assist the directors to call a meeting of creditors, the meeting is to be held on December 3.

"We have a full list from Kiddisave Ltd of the names and addresses of all of the people who have paid money and not received their goods.

"We don't yet know the value of the company's assets and so we can't say at this stage whether there will be money paid back to creditors. If there is, it will be a quite a good while before it is paid out and I don't want to give your false hope in case there is no money to come back.

"We have not yet been appointed liquidator, but if we are, we will let you know in writing as the liquidation progresses over the months as regards whether or not you will receive any money back."

● Fight – Page 21

TRAFFIC

Cycling routes work to see roads closed

MOTORISTS in Walsall and Cannock have been warned of months of temporary restrictions and possible lane closures as work is carried out on three cycling routes.

Highways England started work to introduce a new route from Washbrook Lane in Cannock to Churchbridge in Great Wyrley this week. Once work there is completed, the scheme will move on to the A5/A452 route in Brownhills.

This section of work is expected to start in January. The scheme is expected to take until April 30 2016 to complete, with motorists told that work will be taking place from 9.30am to 3pm and 7pm to 7am Monday to Thursday, as well as 9.30am to 3pm and 7pm to 9am on Fridays. On weekends, work will be carried out from 6pm to 10am on Saturdays and 6pm to 7am on Sundays.

INSIDE

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MP leads calls to clear up pub site



The rubbish at the site

CALLS have been made to clean up the site of a former Walsall pub which is now piled high with rubbish.

Walsall North MP David Winnick is leading the campaign and has said it is 'a disgrace' that the waste has been allowed to build up where the former Leathern Bottle pub once stood.

The pub, in Cresswell Crescent, Mossley, had been targeted by vandals since it closed several years ago.

It was demolished earlier this year following calls from the community to tidy up the site. However, nothing has

been done to move the rubble left there as a result of the demolition and fly-tippers have dumped waste there.

Mr Winnick said: "The Leathern Bottle has been demolished now for some months. The site owners should certainly be strongly urged to complete the job. I would say it is about time a decision is made which would put pressure on those involved to either take proper care of the remnants of the building or have it demolished.

"At the moment, this former public house is vandalised and used on occa-

sions for anti-social purposes. It is a disgrace that it has stayed in its present dilapidated state for so long."

The pub first opened in the 1970s. Police seized drugs and a dangerous dog from the pub in 2009.

When the pub closed, it was earmarked for demolition to make way for a new pub, retail and residential complex under proposals revealed more than two years ago by SEP Properties.

Council chiefs said earlier this year they were opening discussions over its long-term use with the owners.

Ex-Afghanistan soldier jailed for bullets stash

A FORMER soldier from Walsall with nine years unblemished service was jailed for six months after storing 16 bullets at his girlfriend's house.

Former Lance Bombardier Johnathan Allmark, aged 25, claimed he had bought the 14 NATO standard 5.56mm calibre bullets and two 'especially lethal' 0.22mm calibre rounds that expand on impact from an army surplus store to show to his stepson, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The father of one later told police he'd bought the ammunition at an army surplus store in Wolverhampton presuming it had been deactivated, the court heard.

Allmark, of Fisher Road, Walsall, said he wanted the bullets to show his stepson what sort of ammunition he had used in Afghanistan while in the Army.

Ammunition

The court was told how police were first alerted after a neighbour called to say he had seen Allmark carrying a gun last August.

Mr Robert Edwards, prosecuting, said officers forced entry into Allmark's home he but could not locate him or any firearms.

Allmark was arrested later that day after he voluntarily walked in to police at Bloxwich station and told officers he had ammunition stored at his partner's home in Edison Road, Bloxwich.

Mr Edwards said: "A search recovered 14 5.56mm bullets all bearing a NATO stamp and of the type that is standard issue assault rifle ammunition for the British Army. The two 0.22mm rounds were found in a rifle case and are especially lethal because they are a hollow bullet that expand on impact. The defendant told police he'd bought the bullets from a Wolverhampton army surplus store.

"However a check with the shop

Festival to celebrate tournament tie



The event at Cheslyn Hay will celebrate the historic Davis Cup tie between Belgium and Great Britain in Ghent first time since 1936. During the festival, there will be an Under-11 Davis Cup-style team competition for all abilities from 10am to 11am, a family tennis session from 11am to midday and teenager and the adult Davis Cup-style team competition from 11am to 12.30pm. There will also be promotions of reduced 2016 membership at the club as well as coaching offers. To sign up for the event visit tiny.cc/daviscup2015

Contact cheslynhaytennis@live.com or call 07969 829318.

manager confirmed he didn't and wouldn't stock such items."

Mr Lee Egan, defending, said his client had presumed the bullets weren't live but agreed that he'd been "sloppy and careless."

"It's clear the danger is that the ammunition could have fallen into wrong hands and used for nefarious purposes," he said. The court heard how Allmark had served with the East Anglian Regiment in Afghani-

stan at a 'difficult period in our country's armed services'. He is currently unemployed having left the Army and worked for Birmingham City Council for a short while.

Mr Egan said: "He has a child of his own and two step-children and bought the ammunition as a memento to show his stepson what sort of ammunition he'd used in the Army."

Jailing Allmark for six months Recorder Stephen Thomas said he'd

given him credit for an early guilty plea to two charges of possessing expandable ammunition and ammunition for firearms without a certificate.

He added: "It is with some regret that I have to impose a custodial sentence so I will make it as short as I can." Allmark was ordered to serve four months for possession of the 0.22 bullets and two months for possessing 5.56mm rounds, to be served consecutively.

Town to be proud of as £1m revamp completed

THE £1.5 million regeneration scheme to breathe new life into Willenhall has been completed. The Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative, which began back in 2011, has seen 18 buildings in the town centre given makeovers, ranging from new shop fronts to roofs, chimneys and brickwork.

One of the main projects was the revamp of The Bell Inn, the Grade II listed pub in Market Place and one of the town's most historic buildings. The pub dates back to around 1659 but had been empty for a number of years.

After a consortium of residents bought the pub in 2010, the group applied for funding to halt its deterioration.

Repairs were carried out to its roof and windows, and the shop front was replaced with a more traditional design based on historic photographs.

Councillor Adrian Andrew, deputy leader for Walsall Council, said: "This is a real cross party project for Willenhall and I am pleased that I was at the forefront of securing the investment and working to improve the town centre.

"I want to thank all the owners that have engaged with this project and invested in their properties but the jewel in the crown of this investment must be the Bell Pub - all of us on the panel were determined that there would be significant improvements to that property so disgustingly neglected by the previous owners.

"We thank the new owners for their bravery, investment and dedication to achieve such success."

Consultation over flooding

RESIDENTS and businesses in Walsall have been asked to give their opinion on how to prepare and protect the borough from flooding.

A consultation on how the area can reduce its risk of flooding or prepare itself better for a worst case scenario has gone up on the council website.

The consultation is set to end on December 9, with all responses to be looked at and the aim being to have a firm strategy in place by spring. Other councils in the Black Country are running an identical consultation at the same time.

Councillor Louise Harrison said: "Any resident or business that has been the victim of flooding knows only too well the misery it causes. It's good that we are taking a collaborative approach with our Black Country colleagues."

Man taken ill at Baggies dies, 80

AN elderly man taken ill at The Hawthorns during Albion's match with Arsenal on Saturday died later in hospital.

The 80-year-old man from Leicestershire was in the East Stand when stewards were alerted to his condition towards the end of the game.

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Cameron's defence of new Metro Mayor role

A METRO mayor for the West Midlands will provide 'a very direct form of accountability', the Prime Minister has said.

The region is set to have an elected mayor in 2017 as part of landmark devolution plans announced by the Government.

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) signed off on the deal to receive £1bn in funding and gain more control over regional services including road and bus networks.

The Government has thrashed out similar deals with Liverpool and Manchester, with both areas set to elect their own mayors over the next two years.

Speaking in the House of Commons, David Cameron said: "We are currently changing the way our country is run. That is a very direct form of accountability and that is why we can be confident of devolving health and social care to those authorities. For too long, our country has been too centralised."

The new WMCA mayor will wield a number of powers devolved from the Government. They include having overall responsibility for: franchised bus services; house building and maintenance; a new Key Route Network of local authority A-roads that will be managed by the WMCA; and looking after a region-wide transport budget.

Voters in Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall

Councillor calls for hard work

MORE hard work is needed to make sure everyone benefits from plans to create a West Midlands Combined Authority, it has been claimed.

The proposed agreement with Westminster for the authority would see an annual contribution worth £40 million for 30 years made to support an overall investment package worth £8 billion. However, Darlaston Councillor Doug James has called on bosses to ensure money is spread fairly so it can contribute to all areas.

He said: "Government devolution, local government reforms and efficiency will be at the heart of the wider West Midlands in these exciting times and so it must be for all our futures."

High-power tools go from vehicles

THEVES carried out a string of break-ins on three vans and an estate car in Cannock and Norton Canes, stealing a number of high-powered tools. Police are appealing for help in tracking down the raiders.

The thieves targeted vehicles parked on driveways. The break-ins took place between between 6pm on Saturday and 7.30am on Monday. Anyone with any information can call 101.

Poundland shares slide as profits fall



Poundland CEO, Jim McCarthy

SHARES in Poundland fell by as much as a fifth after the Willen-hall-based chain revealed a sharp drop in profits for the first half of its year.

Pre-tax profits were down by more than a quarter, to £9.3 million from £12.6m a year ago. Chief executive Jim McCarthy said this was due to higher costs of Poundland's expansion in Spain and its figures had suffered in comparison to its unexpectedly strong performance last year, partly boosted by the loom bands craze.

At the same time Poundland is

braced for its most important Christmas period in years in the wake of its £55 million takeover of 99p Stores.

Mr McCarthy said the £1-for-everything chain was waiting to assess the impact of Black Friday on shopping patterns over Christmas, but said trading so far had been 'volatile'. He said: "We have seen some weeks that have been up and weeks that have gone the other way. It makes me a little bit nervous."

Investors were unhappy with the profit fall and recent sales figures, and shares in the group fell 20 per cent at

one stage to their lowest since the company floated on the stock market last year. Meanwhile Poundland has launched its own small scale Black Friday sale, offering kitchenware and Akai headphones online.

Overall sales were up 5.6 per cent, at £561 million, although on a like-for-like basis - stripping out the impact of new stores - they were down 2.8 per cent. But the firm said the success seen in the 20 99p Stores so far converted to Poundlands meant it was now expected to have nearly all the 252 stores converted by April.

Rare statues stolen in garden centre raid

RARE statues worth a total of £1,200 were taken during a raid on a family-run garden centre in Aldridge.

The owners of WM Wheat and Son Garden Centre on Chester Road have been left devastated after the expensive figures were taken.

The thieves cut a hole in the fence at the business to get to 10 of the statues, which are made of re-constituted marble.

After moving the statues - which vary in size from 60cm to 1.5m in height - the raiders were caught on CCTV passing them over the fence and putting them into a black Rover, having already broken the security chain on the car park with crowbars.

Staff at the garden centre are now appealing for help to trace the distinctive and easily recognisable female figure statues, which are made by the manufacturer Da Vinci.

Brian Wheat, managing director, said: "We are a small family business employing local people. We can ill afford this damage to our property and the lost stock. The break-in shows that these thieves have no regard for normal, hard-working people.

Expanding

"We are a long running business with a loyal customer base in Walsall, we feel a part of the community here.

"I really hope people can help us track down the statues."

The family business started in 1937, expanding from a small stall on Erdington Market into a garden centre on Hardwick Road, before moving to its current base in 1994.

Mr Wheat added: "We have been in Walsall for a long time now and only once have we had something like this. In that case, the robber took cash from the premises but was eventually caught thanks to DNA testing. Unfortunately, this isn't going to be as easy to solve."

CCTV footage from the time of the theft shows the Rover car driving off, turning north onto Chester Road towards the Old Irish Harp pub. West Midlands Police spokeswoman Sarah Astbury said: "Police are investigating a theft at Ws Wheat's Garden Centre on Chester Road, Aldridge on November 14.

"A number of garden ornaments were stolen. "Anyone with information about the theft or who is offered garden statues matching the above description for sale in unusual circumstances are asked to call police."

Breakthrough hope on grot-spot



Councillor Adam Hicken with resident Charles Moran protest about the ongoing fly-tipping near shops

CAMPAIGNERS living in New Invention are hoping to have finally made a breakthrough after 15 years of trying to sort out a fly-tipping hotspot.

Persistent problems with people dumping waste outside the small shopping precinct and flats on Nottingham Drive have blighted the area for more than a decade, according to one nearby resident who has campaigned mercilessly to try and get action taken.

After Councillor Adam Hicken was alerted to the issue by residents, he took it up with Walsall

Council and a long running debate between the site owners and the council began over who is responsible for the land.

The council's legal team have recently discovered that the land is the responsibility of the shop owners and a legal notice has now been served ordering that they do something to maintain the site.

Charles Moran, a Nottingham Drive resident, said: "This has been a problem for such a long time now and nothing seems to have been done. I have been trying since 1999 to get action taken

but going about actually getting something done has been so difficult. However, we are hopeful that we have now made a breakthrough.

"Not only does persistent fly-tipping and littering make the area look bad, that reflects on local houses and from there, the value of those houses could drop."

Councillor Adam Hicken said: "Whilst a lot of work still needs to be carried out and it is a possibility that a legal battle may occur, there is a confidence that we can now enforce this."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Punk rockers set for Wulfrun date

Punk rock band Sham 69 has set a new date in Wolverhampton for next year.

The band, led by singer Jimmy Pursey, is to play in the Wulfrun Hall on November 5.

Sham 69 had single hits at the height of the punk rock boom in the 1970s with Borsal Breakout, If the Kids are United, Hersham Boys and Hurry up Harry.

The band, which formed in 1976, will be celebrating 40 years in 2016. It originally split in 1980 and has reformed several times over the years.

Pub to make way for apartments

A FIRE-HIT pub in Bloxwich will be knocked down to make way for 14 apartments for adults with learning disabilities, under new plans.

Bromford Developments has submitted proposals for the former Bulls Head in Park Road.

Bosses say the MyPlace development would enable people to live independently while still getting any support their need.

The building has been lying empty since 2007 and said to be structurally unsafe due to substantial fire damage in 2010.

Two are hurt as car overturns

A CAR containing four men hit a wall and overturned in Aldridge.

As a result of the crash, which happened at around 2.15am on Sunday at Brickyard Road, Aldridge, the car's engine was ripped out and ended up lying on the floor next to the overturned vehicle.

The four men inside were all in their twenties. Two ambulance crews and a paramedic area support officer attended, with two of the men being taken to hospital.

Clean-up after camp set to take months

A PATCH of Walsall land where travellers set up camp is starting to be cleaned up - but it may take until the spring to be completed.

The clean-up at Delves Common, off Poplar Avenue, is set to take so long because of waterlogged land due to the recent bad weather.

Half a dozen caravans and vehicles were moved off the site earlier this month.

Burned-out vehicles and rubbish were left behind.

Woodturning show

CANNOCK Chase Woodturning Club will hold their annual show at Chasewater Innovation Centre on December 2 to 6. There will be lots to see for children and adults, with a host of ideas for Christmas presents. Members will be on hand to explain how the items are made.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



THE massacres in France? I am torn between two opinions, the liberal and the biblical. The liberal is the one that goes, we in the West are partly to blame for the madness of the Middle East. We must therefore sit down and talk with Islamic State, just as we have talked to other psychopathic murderers in the past, from the Mau Mau to the IRA, to work out some long-term settlement and a happy ending. The biblical view is that there can be no happy ending. The tribes of the Middle East have been smiting each other for thousands of years; the killing began long before they saw a British, French or American face. The borders of Islam have always been marked by blood and today's militant Islam is incapable of living at peace with itself, let alone with its neighbours. It has nothing to discuss and there is nothing to negotiate because its aim is our utter destruction. The "hostages" taken in a Paris theatre were no such thing; they were taken not for bargaining but for slaughter. We should therefore do the Old Testament thing and smite our enemies with a vengeance. For every one of us they kill, we kill 1,000 of theirs. Every suicide vest detonated in the West will be repaid, not merely with precision smart bombs but with every weapon in our armoury, including those no-one likes to mention. The biblical solution is to rain fire and brimstone on Islamic State and turn its strongholds into puddles of molten sand.

DONALD Trump who, heaven forbid, might one day become President of the United States, says the Paris massacre would have turned out differently if the French were allowed to carry guns. Can you imagine the carnage if 100 handgun-toting concert-goers had whipped out their Magnums and cut loose in a dark, crowded theatre? Terrorism is scary enough but no less terrifying is how many adult Americans cannot tell the difference between real life and Hollywood.

AS the week's horrific events in France unfolded, the many TV and radio interviews reminded us once again how many ordinary French folk speak excellent English, and how few Brits can manage to string the simplest sentence together in any foreign language.

WHEN it was announced that British storms would soon be getting their own names, no-one told us to brace ourselves for American names. Having been battered by Barney, can we look forward to Chuck, Dwight, Ellie-May, Frankie, Geraldo and Homer?

THE latest Strictly Come Dancing (BBC1) was a puzzle. I can't remember seeing so many grown-up people getting so excited about going to Blackpool. Maybe they hadn't been before.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Lock-up for warder in steroids plot

A PRISON officer who plotted with an inmate to smuggle steroids into Oakwood Prison has been locked up. Ex-Royal Marine, Matthew Taylor was jailed for one year and nine months for the 'terrible breach of trust'.

The 23-year-old from Kestrel Court, Burntwood, was to be 'paid handsomely' for bringing a package of illicit steroids into the prison near

Wolverhampton. He had linked up with 'career criminal' Mark Clarke in the wing of the jail he was supervising, using Clarke's partner Donna Duffus on the outside.

The plan never materialised – either because Taylor got cold feet or wanted more money – but his phone calls to Duffus had already been monitored and recorded, said Miss Balvinder Bhatti, prosecuting, at

Stafford Crown Court. Taylor admitted conspiracy to supply a prohibited article and misconduct in public office.

Clarke, aged 47, of Bridgewater Close, Walsall Wood, was jailed for 30 months.

He admitted the conspiracy and a separate offence of attempted burglary at a neighbour's house.

His partner Duffus, aged 39, of the

same address was given a 12-month community order. The judge ruled she was 'entirely under the direction of Clarke'.

Miss Bhatti said the plot began to take shape with a phone call from Clarke to Duffus, which was facilitated by Taylor, in September 2013.

The prison officer had 'befriended' Clarke because of their shared interests, including going to the gym.

Ambulance workers in day-to-day hostilities

AMBULANCE staff have had their lives threatened, been kicked, punched, spat at and more in just six months. New figures discussed at a recent West Midlands Ambulance Service trust board meeting have revealed the number of physical assaults on staff rose by almost 30 per cent between April and September compared to the previous year.

Among these were incidents where ambulance staff were threatened with death and one case where a member of staff had a knife pointed at them.

The figures have led trust chief executive Anthony Marsh to ask for tougher legal action to be taken against members of the public who assault staff.

Mr Marsh said: "It is quite outrageous that our staff are having to put up with such violence.

"The board is determined that we should do everything possible to protect our staff. We are asking them to support us by taking the toughest possible action against people who assault staff. We know the public abhor this violence so we are hopeful that they will support this move."

The number of verbal assaults also rose, by 13 per cent in the same period. Regional Security Manager, Steve Elliker, said: "The penalties handed down are simply not sufficient to deter people currently.

"The fact that some of our staff do not report cases of violence because they do not believe that enough action will be taken against the perpetrator is a sad reflection on how they feel."

Report by Amardeep Bassey

AN NHS doctor and his wife smuggled a 13-year-old African boy from his country and used him as a slave at their home in Walsall, a court heard.

Doctor Emmanuel Edet, aged 61, and his wife Antan, 58, kept Ofonime Sunday Edet, now 40, as a 'house boy' for almost a quarter of a century at various homes in the country, Harrow Crown Court was told.

He was taken from his real Nigerian family without permission – promised work in exchange for money and education, but paid just £2-a-week for 17 hours work a day.

The Edets – who worked as a gynaecologist and senior nursing sister – were found guilty of holding a person in slavery or servitude, child cruelty and assisting unlawful immigration.

The jury heard how, because of work commitments, the Edets constantly moved around the country from Caterham to Scarborough, and then Walsall in the early 1990s where Dr Edet lost his General Medical Council certificate and was told to leave the UK.

The Edets then moved to Northolt in 1994 from Walsall before finally settling in a rented house in Perivale, west London, in 2001.

Investigating officer Det Con Andy Nolan explained that he would sleep on the floor, prepare meals, and didn't go to bed until after the couple's children did.

The court heard they convinced him that if he went to the police, he would be arrested for being an illegal immigrant.

His only treat in his entire time with the family was a trip to Flamingo Land in Scarborough in 1991. They managed to fool people by claiming that Ofonime had been adopted and he suffered for years until he contacted the Hope for Justice charity.

Antan and Emmanuel Edet were arrested in March last year. The Edets will be sentenced at Harrow Crown Court on December 7.

Monty men help to raise thousands



Front, left, Anthony McDonagh and Tim Cook, centre is Sean Mayo, and top from left, Neil Proffitt, Mick Fox, and Craig Spencer, performing the Full Monty at the Darlaston All Active Centre

SIX men gave an audience of women a show to remember when they stripped off at a charity night.

Mick Fox, Neil Proffitt, Craig Spencer, Sean Mayo, Tim Cook and Anthony McDonagh bared all at The Full Monty event in Darlaston. The event was thought up by the six, who have daughters all attending the Classic Academy of Dance in Willenhall. It raised money for Birmingham's Children's Hospital and Cancer Research.

Mr Fox and Mr Proffitt came up with the idea of doing something for charity, posing the question to the other four five months ago.

The night of entertainment took place on November 14 at Darlaston All Active on Willenhall Road, which included a Gary Barlow tribute act, two stand-up comedians, a drag act and the Full Monty, along with a disco and a raffle.

The men have rehearsed once a week for the last three months for their five minute performance.

Mr Fox, aged 29 from Wednesfield said: "It was an absolutely epic night, that's the only way I can describe it. We've raised well over £3,000 and the donations keep coming in, so it's all been very worth it."

"Everyone's been affected by cancer and the Children's Hospital is a great cause, obviously we all have kids so wanted to support the cause. We're looking to try and do something at least once a year now, so watch this space."

Anyone looking to donate to the cause can call 01215686144 or 07970 500561.

Vaz hits out at health cut plans

A WALSALL MP says proposed cuts to public health funding in the borough will have a 'serious detrimental effect' on the lives of residents.

Valerie Vaz, MP for Walsall South, said there is growing concern over planned public health cuts of £1.6 million. She has written to Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt MP asking him to consider increasing Walsall's public health budget.

"The proposed reduction in funding will have a serious detrimental effect on public health in Walsall."

"If Walsall's allocation was the same as neighbouring authorities with similar levels of deprivation, Walsall would receive an additional £4.26 million per year. Walsall is number 35 on the list of the most deprived local authority areas in England."

Christmas fair to raise church funds

A CHURCH in West Bromwich is preparing to host its Christmas fair this weekend. Wesley Methodist Church, in High Street, will hold the event on Saturday from 11am. All proceeds from the event go to church funds. Call Beryl Price on 01922 635891.

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Resurgent HomeServe to bring in more jobs

WALSALL-BASED home repairs company HomeServe is set to create around 300 new jobs over the next 12 months.

The business, which has put past issues over customer service and mis-selling firmly behind it, has taken on 180 new people in the UK over the past 12 months out of 300 in total around the world.

Chief executive Richard Harpin said a similar level of new jobs – at least half in the UK – was expected over the next 12 months including a significant number of engineers. The past year's recruitment is on top of 150 gas engineers added to the group with its recent £8 million purchase of Home Energy Services, a heating business based in Nottingham.

HomeServe, which has its headquarters at Cable Drive, is also sponsor of the shirts and main stand at Walsall FC. "We are delighted that they are doing so well this season at the same time as we are on the rise," Mr Harpin said.

HomeServe saw its pre-tax profits fall from £25.3m to £21.3m despite a more than £20m rise in revenue to £262.3m and an increase in customers worldwide from 5.9 million to 6.6m in the six months to the end of September.

Mr Harpin said profits would have been higher but for the strength of the euro which impacted on its European

Petition over PCSOs at 1,000

AN online petition opposing plans to cut the number of PCSOs in the West Midlands has gained 1,000 supporters in under a week.

Nik Luzaic from Great Wyrley set up the petition on change.org which has drawn attention to the nationwide campaign to save PCSOs.

It was revealed last week by West Midlands Police that the number of PCSOs would fall from 535 to 119, a reduction of 416 positions, as part of a plan to save £130 million by 2020.

Almost 500 signatures were gained within four days of publishing. Comments have been posted on the petition branding the proposed cuts as 'destruction' with concerns about the increased threat to terrorism with fewer PCSOs on the beat.

Watercolours at exhibition

BLACK Country artist Martin Poole is having an exhibition of his watercolour paintings in Dudley town centre. The work by the artist, who lives in Tipton, will be featured in the Art-space premises in Birdcage Walk from December 3 to 19.

The community project's exhibition space is open 10am to 4pm Thursday and Friday and 11am to 4pm on Sat-

Buyers investing in flats for health staff



The Navigation point complex

PROPERTY investors have been snapping up new apartments in Walsall to cash in on plans to boost the number of nurses and support workers at Walsall Manor Hospital.

They are hoping to rent out the homes, built at the Navigation Point apartment complex, to the new hospital workforce.

Lichfield-based building firm Walton Homes says it has sold two thirds of its available homes on the Navigation Point complex, on the outskirts of the town centre, in just six weeks, mainly to investors planning to let

them to nurses, locum doctors and support workers.

Amy Summerton, director of Walton Homes, said: "There are 18 apartments at Navigation Point and we have sold two thirds of them within a matter of weeks, with the majority being on buy-to-let mortgages."

"At the beginning of this year, Walsall Healthcare Trust was forced to declare a major incident due to the demand on resources and subsequently drew up winter plans to deal with the expected influx in patients."

Walsall Manor came under pres-

sure over Christmas last year, when it was pushed to full capacity with almost 100 extra patients a week.

Amy Summerton said: "The NHS agreed to invest £3.5 million in more than 80 registered nurses and 35 care support workers, with the intention of all of them being in place by the autumn, and savvy investors have recognised that those people will need to rent homes close by. Navigation Point fitted the bill perfectly," she said.

Five apartments remain at Navigation Point, with a starting price of £84,950.

Jams see average speeds fall to less than 14 mph

COMMUTERS are spending more time stuck in traffic jams as the average rush hour speed plummets to less than 14mph, new figures have revealed.

Motorists in the West Midlands have got used to the misery of clogged roads, but official data from the Department of Transport shows that many journeys in the region are a fifth slower than they were a year ago.

Rush hour speeds were down to 13.9mph on average in the 12 months to September 2015 – a drop of 22.3 per cent from the previous year.

And nine of the worst performing A-roads were in the Black Country, with nine routes seeing an average speed of less than 13mph.

The figures have sparked calls for toll charges to be scrapped on the M6 Toll to free up the region's commuter routes. Others describe the figures as 'an embarrassment to the Black Country'. The A4030 southbound through Smethwick had the lowest average speed in the region, with drivers crawling along at a snail-paced 8.7mph during the morning commute.

Bhanu Dhir, head of policy of the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, has called on the West Midlands Combined Authority to take action.

Attractive

He said traffic delays cost hauliers in the region at least £300 million per year. "We see a priority of the combined authority being better capacity and capability from our public transport infrastructure making it a much more attractive proposition than it is now," he added.

"Furthermore we look forward to working with them to lobby the Secretary of State for Transport to make better use of strategic assets such as the M6 Toll so it functions better to relieve the pressure on local roads.

"We need more imagination and determination and the private sector will play its part in making improvements to what is frankly an embarrassment to the Black Country."

The A34 at Great Barr was another slow run, with average speeds down 22.7 per cent from the previous year at 9.2mph.

Wolverhampton has been particularly badly hit by traffic congestion in recent years, with a revamp to the Midland Metro and city centre roadworks causing major delays. The east-bound ring road saw an excruciatingly slow average speed of 10.6mph.

Club's sailing on after windfall



Members of Aldridge Sailing Club with one of their new boats, at the club in Barns Lane

A SAILING club is celebrating after scooping a £10,000 grant to allow them to buy two new boats – meaning more people can train and compete.

Aldridge Sailing Club training principal, Andy Jukes, applied for the grant from Sport England.

It has meant that the club could purchase two new Topaz Argo boats which can allow more people to be instructed on it at one time.

Mr Jukes, who has been at the

club for 12 years, described it as fantastic news with the new additions ideal for training new members.

He said: "The two new boats are ideal for training as they are nice and stable and very robust."

Speaking about securing the funding grant, Mr Jukes added: "I had heard that Sport England were offering various funding that sporting clubs could apply for and that you could apply for

up to £10,000. Last year we had a lot more interest in the club than usual, but not enough resources and boats for people to get out on, so I decided to apply for the whole amount."

Aldridge Sailing Club is a small, family run establishment based in Barns Lane.

For more information about the club, or to book to take part in their annual taster sessions, visit their website at aldrigesc.org.uk

NEWS IN BRIEF

Eight banned from hospital

EIGHT people were banned from Walsall Manor Hospital, with the exception of needing emergency treatment, in three months over violence and aggression against staff, bosses have revealed.

One alleged offender was reported to police and was remanded to court.

The figures show in July, August and September, seven red card 'exclusion letters' were issued to people, effectively excluding them from trust premises for a 12 month period.

Six yellow card warning letters were also issued to people.

Flu jabs call by chiefs for winter

A CAMPAIGN has been launched by health bosses to encourage people to get a flu vaccine this winter.

The Stay Well Walsall campaign, aims to promote of the range of free local NHS services that are available and helps people to choose the most appropriate service to use if they're unwell or injured. Public health chief Councillor Rose Martin said: "Winter is traditionally a busy time for the NHS and social care services, meaning that there is a greater than usual demand on local services." For details, visit www.walsallcgc.nhs.uk

Hope on traffic boost for town

TRAFFIC calming measures on a busy road in Willenhall could soon be introduced.

After lobbying Walsall Council to look into a solution to the problem on Lichfield Road, New Invention, Councillor Ian Shires said the issue is close to being resolved.

According to the Liberal Democrat, the local authority is looking at introducing a 'watchman' speed activated digital sign and refreshing road markings.

Showcase for young dancers at Arena

AN event featuring some of the best young dancers in the Black Country will take place next month.

Flexus Dance Collective, which recently joined with the Arena Theatre in Wolverhampton in an effort to increase audiences for contemporary dance shows, will showcase work by its performers on December 9.

The show, titled Next Steps, will feature a variety of performances from dancers of all ages. For tickets visit www.wlv.ac.uk/arena-theatre/

Rush-hour delays

TWO vans were involved in a crash on the M6 which caused rush-hour delays. The accident happened on the slip road at junction 10 for Walsall at around 4pm on Monday.

The northbound side smash caused delays on the approach to the motorway turn-off of around 10 minutes.

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Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. "Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people

money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done.

We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding

area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people



I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Brian a call for a free quotation on 0800 61 21 118 and he'll be happy to help!

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews



Movie has job to make it pay at box office

APPARENTLY the new film about the life of American computer tycoon Steve Jobs hasn't been quite the box office hit that had been hoped for. Just two weeks after its launch, the movie was pulled from more than 2,000 cinemas by Universal, citing fierce competition. Which is surprising really, given its truly unique plot.

I hope I'm not spoiling the story for all those of you who were never going to watch it anyway. But essentially, in the 1970s a bloke with a beard called Steve goes into business with another bloke, who also has a beard and is also called Steve. Things don't work out, they squabble, and Steve – one of them anyway – goes his own way and sets up a rival business. After a lot of navel-gazing and finding himself, Steve is reunited with Steve (the one with the grey beard), and tells him he 'has not been in a good place'. And they launch a computer.

A bit like Alan Sugar. Only without the peageor or the television show.

Just one question. How did that not smash box-office records?

WESTERN intervention in the Middle East. Disenchantment among a disaffected youth. Lack of educational opportunities and poverty. These are the things the bleeding heart liberals usually blame for the barbaric acts of terror of the kind we have seen recently in Paris.

Not the Prince of Wales, though, he has come up with a far more creative explanation. His Highness says it is all down to global warming. At least when his dad says something crass he usually gives us a laugh.

WEST Mercia's deputy police and crime commissioner Barrie Sheldon has spoken out, saying he wanted to debunk some of the myths about speeding enforcement. He says far from being a cash cow for the police, it has raised less than £1.5 million for the "safety partnership" in 12 months, all of which will be spent on road. In other words, more speed cameras.

He adds that mobile police speed traps are only set on roads where more than 15 per cent of drivers have been clocked speeding.

But isn't that the wrong way of going about it? Surely the only criteria should be the number of accidents. If people are driving above the speed limit and not causing accidents, then that probably suggests the limit is too low.

Oh, and one other thing. Mr Sheldon admits that he himself has been fined for speeding. Now far be it from me to criticise. Indeed, show me a motorist who never speeds, and I will show you a liar. But when even the man responsible for enforcing the rules on speeding gets caught, doesn't that suggest maybe they are a bit too strict?



The Queen and Prince Philip's arrival on the Royal Train



In the driving seat of the tram named after Angus Adams



Bishop of Birmingham David Urquhart, with the royals

Queen is on track for special visit to Brum

It was a right royal occasion as The Queen and Prince Philip arrived to tour the second city. CLARE BUTLER reports

THE heavens may have opened but the showers were never going to rain on the parade on this great royal occasion, which was carried out with additional security in place, following the Paris terror attacks.

Looking perfect in pink, The Queen was all smiles as she took a tour of New Street Station alongside The Duke of Edinburgh last Thursday.

Heavy downpours didn't stop the second city visit going ahead as the pair gave the newly-refurbished New Street Station and Grand Central the royal seal of approval.

While in Birmingham, The Queen and Prince Philip stuck to a busy schedule, and also visited a war memorial, the Midland Metro extension and Birmingham Dental Hospital and School of Dentistry.

Wearing a Peter Enrie cerise pink brocade dress with a pink cashmere coat accompanied by a matching hat by Angela Kelly, The Queen carried one of her trademark Walsall-made Launer London handbags for her visit to the West Midlands.

Maroon

She was welcomed to Birmingham amid high security in the wake of the atrocities in the French capital to visit a series of locations in the city.

The visit got underway when the Royal couple arrived promptly at 10.20am at platform 2a on New Street Station on board the royal train, distinctively maroon with red and black lining and a grey roof.

It slowly settled alongside the platform before doors opened and the monarch emerged with a bright smile to warmly greet Vice Lord-Lieutenant for the West Midlands, Colonel George Marsh and Deputy Lord-Lieutenant, Professor Deirdre Kelly.



Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke officially open the station

On arrival, the 89-year-old monarch was animated and friendly, flanked by Prince Philip with his mischievous grin ready to spark into his unmistakable sharp wit.

She was introduced to staff from construction company Mace which had been behind work on the station and surrounding Grand Central, anchored by retail giant John Lewis.

And they gave their royal wishes to William Grant, a trainee employee of Mace, who was celebrating his 26th birthday.

"She wished me a happy birthday. "Pretty amazing, someone had mentioned it beforehand," William, who is from Birmingham, said.

"Wasn't expecting that. "We just chatted about our training scheme then. They were very interested."

After its five-year renovation, New Street Station now has an enlarged concourse ac-

commodating 170,000 passengers a day with Grand Central above.

As The Queen moved into view, crowds 10-deep cheered, happy to catch a glimpse of the monarch on her visit. The royal couple attended a short ceremony before The Queen unveiled a plaque dedicated to the reopening and she signed the visitor book.

While the majority of her hour-long visit to the station was inside, The Queen emerged into rain clutching a pink umbrella for the final stage of her engagement.

Rain was lashing down on people gathered by the Pals War Memorial commemorating the Birmingham Pals – three infantry battalions of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment who volunteered to fight in the First World War.

The Pals War Memorial is positioned outside the Metro station entrance off Smallbrook Queensway.

During a special ceremony, The Queen joined the prince in laying a wreath at the memorial dedicated to railwaymen who died during the First World War.

And the Bishop of Birmingham, the Right Reverend David Urquhart, called for unity in light of attacks in Paris and Beirut – where around 40 people were killed in deadly bombings in Lebanon on November 12.

With the royal couple stood beside him in solemn contemplation, the Bishop told gathered crowds: "We gather to dedicate this memorial to railway workers from the First World War at a time of great distress around the nations.

"We gather our thoughts today with those of people in Paris and Beirut as they suffer violence and destruction of murderous intent. "At the same time we give thanks to those who seek to keep our streets and nations peaceful."

The Queen received a bouquet of flowers from four-year-old Taahlia Cameron before boarding a Midland Metro tram.

Chairman

She toured the tram and met workers behind the Birmingham city centre Metro extension and even got in the driving seat herself for a look around the cab.

The Queen named a tram in memory of Angus Adams, a Dudley borough councillor who died in 2012.

Mr Adams was also chairman of West Midlands transport authority Centro.

Her Majesty gave the newly-built Midland Metro Tram Extension at Bull Street the Royal seal of approval.

The Bull Street tram stop is due to open next month as part of a 1.4-km extension to the Midland Metro, which links Birmingham with Wolverhampton.

Mr Adams was a key figure behind the £128 million Midland Metro extension.

Addressing the crowd before inviting the Queen to unveil the name of the tram, Centro chief executive Geoff Inskip said the Metro would reduce congestion and boost the regional economy by creating jobs and growth.

"Already we are seeing inward investment coming to Birmingham and Wolverhampton because of our new trams," he said.

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Weds 23 Dec	Christmas In Bournemouth	Durley Dean	5	£479.95
Weds 23 Dec	Christmas Lancashire Delight	Mercure Bolton	5	£359.00
Weds 23 Dec	Christmas in Southport Royal	Clifton	5	£479.00
Sun 27 Dec	Cruise to Bruges	P&O Ferry	3	£89.00
Sun 27 Dec	Cruise to Amsterdam	P&O Ferry	3	£89.00
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Mental health care now at breaking point

I'M sure that we have all seen lots of headlines recently highlighting the fact that all levels of care in this country, are at breaking point, including and in particular, mental health care. It is now estimated that the value of 'family carers' who look after loved ones at home, is estimated at £132 billion to the Government 'equal to the total government budget, for the National Health?' Surely then, pinpointing the fact that this is 50 per cent underfunded!

Having been directly involved with care myself for close on 30 years, I

have campaigned for better care in this country for around 10 of them, as it was becoming increasingly obvious, that problems were stacking up and it is now widely accepted that all aspects of care in England and Wales are stretched beyond tolerable limits, despite the fact that the National Press, TV and a number of highly respected support agencies, such as Age UK, CQC, Care UK and UKHCA, have continually campaigned in an effort to pressure the Government into changing their unrelenting hardnosed approach to reducing care costs, irre-

spective of the effect that this is having on the sick, elderly and disabled! It is blatantly obvious that substantially more investment is urgently needed to bring all aspects of care up to the required level. I have on previous occasions suggested people write to their MPs, but perhaps it is time to take it to the top - write now, to Alistair Burt, Minister for Care (copy to) Jeremy Hunt, Health Minister, Westminster LONDON otherwise it may not be there, if and when you may need it!

A KYTE
Great Wyrley

Travellers proposal concern

I WOULD like to say well done to our West Midlands Council leaders and councillors in trying to deal with the largest cutbacks in government finances to councils any of us have ever known in our history.

Could I also ask Walsall councillors to sort out the problem of the travellers site that council officers have drawn up. For them to suggest it could be on the old multi-purpose site in Darlaston - right next to homes, is a ridiculous proposal, and the other site around the Old Hall Estate, Bentley area is just as bad.

Not only is this an estate of nearly 350 homes, but the small area of open space is the people's 'green lung' next to one of the busiest motorways in the country.

The multi-purpose site is an ideal place for senior citizen bungalows to be built, as is the area in St Lawrence Way, Darlaston - where the multi-storey flats used to be.

BILL MADELEY MBE
Darlaston

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Walsall Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

EMAIL

walsall.chron@
expressandstar.co.uk

We must encourage teacher recruitment

APPLICATIONS to teach are falling, down by 21k compared to last year. We will need nearly 160,000 additional Teachers over the next three years. At the same time pupil numbers continue to rise, with a projected 582,000 of primary and secondary pupils by 2020. There is a growing crisis in teacher recruitment across the country.

If you were a new teacher where would you seek a career? Would it be Queen Marys Grammar School, Walsall, as first choice?

Where does this leave the recruitment of teachers in communities characterised with high levels of unemployment, low aspiration and, low earnings? Teaching in schools in such areas is more difficult than it is in others but, crucially, they are the schools that need the most able, competent and, caring teachers. Incentives are needed to get our brightest and best working with our most desperate and, disadvantaged. Only through recruiting the best of the best will we encourage young people to believe in education.

I support a scheme where graduates with an approx £30k debt could have it written off at 3k a year over a 10 year period to attract and, retain good teachers.

CLLR DOUG JAMES
Walsall

Cinema is providing a vital role

I FEEL I must write to express delight at the opening of the Aldridge Cinema.

My dear mother, sadly suffering the early stages of dementia, no longer enjoys the vital stimulation of being among others, or being able to safely visit a suitable, safe venue.

Following recommendation from her GP, she now gains much benefit and enjoyment from her Wednesday afternoon visits to the cinema held at the youth theatre in Noddy Park Road. The free tea and biscuit, calm atmosphere and pleasant staff provide her and others with a convenient, inexpensive and enjoyable weekly routine.

So well done to organiser Russell Smith and his team. let us hope more people start attending and ensure this project survives. Aldridge has long been without a cinema and the village should be delighted and supportive.

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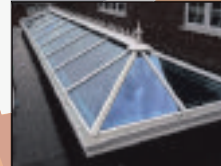


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Saddlers boss Dean is on hand to give medals

HIS team maybe fighting to win the league title, but Walsall boss Dean Smith found time to present youngsters with sporting medals at a college sports centre.

The Saddlers manager was at Walsall College's new £11million business and sports hub to give supported learning students silver medals following a regional football tournament.

The team, which represents the college, beat off tough competition from four other West Midlands' colleges in the regional final but narrowly missed out on gold medals, despite scoring an impressive 14 goals and only losing their final game during the tournament.

Paul Bagnall, who is the curriculum manager for students with learning difficulties or disabilities, explained: "Many of the students are big Saddlers fans so they were really excited about being presented with their medals by Dean."

Achievement

"It was a great reward for all the hard work and commitment they put in to the tournament and beforehand in training sessions. We are all very proud of their achievement."

During his visit, Dean was also given a tour of the sports hub, including its gym which is fitted with over £100,000 worth of top of the range fitness equipment, the multi-purpose sports hall, which can be hired for a range of team sports, and the sports injury clinic.

The manager for the League One high fliers said: "The Hub is a fantastic venue which is clearly focused on providing quality services and facilities for the whole community. It is just what we need in Walsall."

"The sports facilities are exceptional and have been created to very high industry standards."

"I'm looking forward to strengthening the club's partnership with the college and exploring more ways in



Walsall FC manager Dean Smith



Dean with student Chloe Berrey



Dean at The Hub, Wisemore Campus



With football captain Dean Degville

which can work together." Walsall College's sports development co-ordinator, Mark Howard, said: "We are delighted to have had the opportunity to showcase the hub and the new sports facilities to Dean."

"There are a number of additional partnerships we are exploring together which will help to enrich our Sport

curriculum and develop students' industry skills further, and also support Walsall FC in their ambitions."

Walsall were held to a draw at the Banks's Stadium on Saturday after Sheffield United managed to make it one-all, despite a bright home performance which has left the Saddlers third in the table.

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Artist's back on a roll



Maurice Ivor Birch, with his drawings on the scroll

TALENTED artist Maurice Ivor Birch thought he had drawn his final sketch after suffering his fifth stroke in July. The summer attack had been his worst to date and he lost all feeling in his right side as a result.

But the 74-year-old self-taught artist, who has dedicated the vast majority of his life to his love of drawing, was not going to let it get in the way of his passion.

Maurice has spent more than 40 years sketching historic buildings from around his home town of Aldridge on to a scroll he purchased at a car boot sale in Cannock back in 1969. A selection of that work made it into Aldridge On A Roll, a poetry and local history book released by Mapseekers Archived Publishing last month.

However, following publication Maurice was hit by the series of strokes and was confined to his garden and conservatory in Aldridge with his devoted wife, Beryl.

He said: "I really did think I couldn't carry on. I had lost the feeling in my right side and even going out and promoting the book felt like too much for me. I even said to friends that I wouldn't be doing any more sketches."

In recent weeks, Maurice has worked his strength up and is now back to his scroll, which he says acts as a historical record of the town he grew up in and lives in to this day.

His latest sketches include Pennard House in Stonnall Road and Croft Cottage in Portland Road. He said: "One day I just thought, why should I give this up just because of these physical problems? 'I decided I wasn't going to let it beat me and I started to draw again.' For information on how to get a copy of Aldridge on a Roll call 07525 083463.

People's life expectancy among the UK's lowest

PEOPLE in parts of the Black Country have among the lowest life expectancy in England, new figures have revealed.

And though residents can expect to live between two and three years longer than they would have 15 years ago, many areas' national ranking has plummeted.

This is compared to people who live in Staffordshire, who not only have a higher life expectancy than people in the Black Country, but whose areas are also in the top half of the national rankings. The life expectancy for men and women is below the national average for every area in the Black Country.

In Walsall, women are predicted to live on average four years longer than men with a life expectancy of 82 compared to 78. This ranks them 296th and 254th in the national rankings. Ten years ago the life expectancies in the town were 80 and 75 respectively.

Walsall councillor Ian Robertson, the cabinet member for health, said: "The issue in Walsall is the disparity between areas. You will find there is, in some cases, a 10 year life expectancy difference from one part to another part.

"In Walsall there tends to be an East/West divide. Bloxwich, Palfrey and Dar-

By Jack Avery

laston, that corridor tends to drag the average down while areas such as Aldridge and Streetly bring the average up. From a public health point of view this is an area that we're trying to address. It's very important that one targets the disadvantaged areas."

Men's life expectancy in Sandwell is 77, two and a half years below the England average, and 332nd out of 345 areas across the country. Their rank used to be 327. Women in Sandwell can expect to live to 81 years old, but this is still a lowly 322nd out of 345 in the UK.

Men and women in Wolverhampton don't fare much better as, despite life expectancies of 78 and 82 respectively, they are ranked 316th and 303rd in the national rankings.

Wolverhampton councillor Elias Mattu, the cabinet member for adults, said: "This is something that has to be dealt with."

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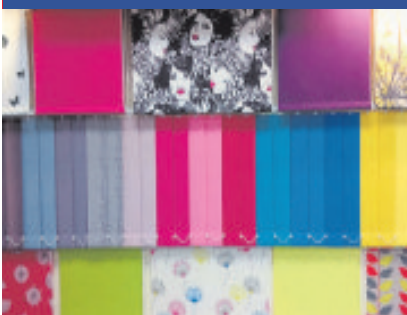
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Santa sleighing them in Walsall

FESTIVE joy will spread across Walsall as Father Christmas makes his annual tour of the town

Walsall Rotary Club has revealed a host of dates that its Santa sleigh will be out in and around the town from December 3 until Christmas Eve.

It will cover a total of 15 events, including Delves, Chuckery, Rushall and the town centre. Volunteers will be collecting for 70 hours to raise money for local Rotary charities. The event kicks off at The Bridge, Walsall Tree Festival on Thursday, December

3 from 4pm until 7pm. Then the sleigh will be at the Saddlers Centre on Friday, December 4, Saturday, December 5, Friday, December 11 and Saturday, December 12 from 11am until 4pm.

There will be street collecting at Farmers Boy in Barns Lane, Rushall on Monday, December 14 from 6pm until 8pm, Rushall Manor, Buchanan Road and The Dilke also from 6pm until 8pm on Tuesday, December 15 and Chuckery Broadway and Duke of York from 6pm until 8pm on Wednesday, December 16. On Thursday, De-

cember 17, the sleigh will be at Delves Tiger and Bell Inn also from 6pm until 8pm before going to Walsall Town Centre pubs on Friday, December 18 also at the same time.

The sleigh will then move on to Crown Wharf on Saturday, December 19 from 9am until 5pm and Saturday, December 20 from 10am until 4pm.

It will finish off at Morrisons in Lichfield Street from 8am until 5pm on the dates of Tuesday, December 22 and Wednesday, December 23 and 8am until 12.30pm on Christmas Eve.

Trees crash down as Storm Barney hits



Strong winds of up to 70mph brought down an oak tree across Walsall Golf Club's fairway after the storm

STRONG winds brought down an oak tree across a golf club's fairway – just one of many toppled by Storm Barney.

Winds of up to 70mph brought down dozens of trees, scaffolding and even a tower at the Fort Shopping Centre in Birmingham.

In the Walsall borough, an oak tree came down at the 16th fairway at Walsall Golf club.

Members posted pictures of the fallen tree on Twitter.

Jon Merchant, head greenkeeper at the club, based off The Broadway, found the tree at 8am last Wednesday.

He said: "It's a shame, as it was an

old oak tree that was about 80 to 90 years old.

"We arrived to do our usual grounds check at 7am and then at 8am we found the tree on the floor. It was on the 16th fairway on the left-hand side, 150 yards off the tee.

"We have been clearing the tree away for most of the day, a couple of us have helped whilst we've had a chainsaw to dismantle the bigger pieces. We'll then get a trailer to take it away next week. It hasn't affected business," he added.

Across the Midlands trees were forced down by gusts of winds, closing

some roads and blocking others.

Lane Avenue in Walsall was also affected as another tree collapsed, ending up blocking the road. Two lanes of the M6 northbound between junctions 6 and 7 were also closed due to a fallen lamppost.

The ongoing disruption last night caused the closure of the Wolverhampton to Birmingham railway line after a tree came down on overhead power lines in Coseley.

This impacted surrounding services, including in Walsall, where routes to Rugeley and Birmingham were delayed.



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Bully kicks off support for toy appeal



Alison Hankinson, from Storage King, joins Steve Bull as he Gets behind the Express & Star toy appeal

WOLVES legend Steve Bull has urged local businesses and Black Country folk to get on board the Express & Star Toy Appeal and donate.

The former striker has asked people to be generous to help out youngsters this Christmas who may not be as fortunate as others.

The campaign will look to send a special gift to those children and support a number of good causes including the families affected by the closure of Caparo plants in Darlaston, Dudley and West Bromwich.

While children's wards at Russells Hall in Dudley, Wolverhampton's New

Cross and Sandwell General Hospital will all benefit from the donations too.

Bully said: "I think it's a brilliant campaign. I think everyone's toys can benefit children and charities all over the place which is a great thing – and those who do things for charity are very good people.

"To anyone thinking about getting involved with the campaign I would say get on board straight away.

"I would reach out to all the toy stores and say – we've got all these people on board you get on board as well."

The Express & Star has teamed up

with Storage King to run the campaign.

The gifts must be new but unwrapped so that the charities are able to select the right gift to fit the recipient. Go to expressandstar.com for a full list and more details.

Drop-off bins have been set up at the Express & Star's offices in Wolverhampton, Station Street in Walsall, Unit 8 Ionic Park in Birmingham New Road, Dudley and 133 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich.

While a new bin has been placed at the Toys R Us on the Wolverhampton Road in Oldbury.

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Engineering training boost with workshops

A TRAINING provider is looking to the future after refurbishing and expanding its engineering workshops.

Performance Through People Training, located in Essex Terrace, Intown, Walsall, recently held an opening event to unveil its new workshops.

Bosses hope it will be where the future of engineering in the Black Country will be trained.

The state of the art facilities welding equipment and other tools big businesses advised PTP to purchase in order to train the young people to the highest standards.

Rob Colbourne, general manager, said: "The opening event was a big success, we had about 50 people attend including representatives from engineering and manufacturing companies in the region."

Jaguar

"We have consulted with them every step of the way to make sure that we are set up with the best equipment so that our trainees can leave ready to go straight in to work."

"There appears to be a growing trend for engineering work in the Black Country, thanks in part to the success of Jaguar Land Rover. Apprentices are really taking off too, schools are much more open to letting companies speak to their students about the benefits of earning while they learn."

"We will continue to invest in fit for purpose equipment in all the sectors we offer training in and hopefully support local employers to compete in what is now a world market."

The company is one of a team of expert partners who are working with The Express & Star on the Ladder for the Black Country campaign.



Louise Perry with Eleanor Spragg



Instructor Daniel Shorter with trainees



PTP chairman John Punch, operations director Carolyn Stokes, LEP chief Stewart Towe CBE, business development director Gill Durkin, and MD Rob Colbourne

Apprenticeships at leather firm

UP to eight new apprenticeships are up for grabs at a luxury leather goods manufacturer. Aldridge-based Whitehouse Cox have created the roles to cope with high demand.

An open day was held at the historic firm's factory in Fellows Court, Anchor Brook Industrial Park yesterday. Staff from the company were on

hand to speak to potential candidate about the role. Adrian Harris, production manager, said: "There is a skills gap for these sort of roles. Successful candidates will be given training to earn a NVQ and work with our staff on the production floor."

The firm is a big exporter with its products, such as wallets.

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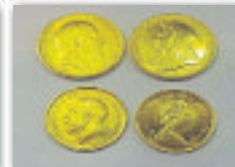
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Health workers in HIV advice

PUBLIC health workers have taken to the streets of Walsall this week to raise awareness of undiagnosed cases of HIV in the borough.

Staff from Walsall Council are offering advice and guidance, as well as giving out free HIV testing kits until Friday.

Around 18,000 people are currently living with undiagnosed HIV nationally, translating into more than 60 cases in Walsall.

The national HIV and AIDS reporting team claim there are 309 residents in Walsall who are currently accessing local HIV treatment services.

The campaign is taking place in Gallery Square, in Walsall town centre.

Punch announces £1 million investment in Walsall pubs

PUB group Punch is investing £1 million into Walsall in time for Christmas, creating 50 more jobs.

The Staffordshire-based group is pumping money into a makeover of four of its pubs in Walsall and another in Cannock ready for the festive season.

All within 10 miles of each other, The Shire Oak on Lichfield Road, Brownhills; The Watling Trough on Ablewell Street, Walsall; The

Report by Simon Penfold

Farmers Boy on Barns Lane, Rushall; the Bowman on Myatt Avenue, Aldridge; and the Hen House on Eskrett Street, Hednesford, are all being given a new lease of life.

In a further boost to the local community, a total of 50 jobs have been created across the venues. The Shire Oak was the first to re-open

its doors last Thursday following a £350,000 joint investment by Punch and local businessmen Kevin Brook and David Singh.

The rejuvenated pub has been transformed into a welcoming place for local people to eat and drink with a number of regular offers throughout the week such as an 'Early Bird' menu, a two-course lunch offer and a 'Monday Club' where there will be various offers on beers/lagers. Weekly activities will include a quiz night every Sunday from 8pm and live sports shown.

Bosses hit out at retail scheme

The owners of Walsall's Saddlers Centre have lodged a 'fundamental' objection to Cannock's new £115 million designer shopping village.

Bosses at Topland, which owns the Saddlers Centre, want the controversial Mill Green scheme rejected. However, planning officers have recommended Cannock councillors give it the nod.

Topland said: "The scheme will draw trade away from Walsall town centre and will attract occupiers that could have otherwise located within Saddlers and the wider town centre.

"The proposed development will have a significant adverse impact upon Walsall and the surrounding defined centres."

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Objectors hit out at chapel scheme



The Providence chapel, situated in New Road, Willenhall
RESIDENTS are objecting to plans which will see a Victorian chapel in Willenhall turned into a 17-bedroom accommodation block.

Developers want to transform Providence Chapel in New Road under new proposals. But the plans have sparked fear among residents who believe it could bring crime and anti-social behaviour to the area.

The chapel was built in 1879 and in use until 2008 when it closed due to a dwindling congregation.

Now, London-based Jamil and Anila Hashim have submitted plans which would see single-bed accommodation and a communal space for lounge, dining and catering. All rooms will be en-suite. There would also be six car parking spaces as well as bicycle spaces.

The parents of Joanne Rogers live in nearby Newlands Close and the chapel backs on to their garden.

Speaking on behalf of her parents, Mrs Rogers, 47, who lives in Twyford Grove, Wednesfield, said: "There's a group in the street that are up in arms about it. They had a planning application letter come through to the street, it didn't say even on there what it is going to be, but when they looked at the plans it looks like a hostel."

"There's no facilities in those rooms at all, but just a shower room for each." The married mother-of-two who works for the NHS added that residents are organising a petition against the plans. A decision will be made by planners at Walsall Council at a later date.

Women are getting £90 less than male staff

WOMEN workers in the Black Country and Staffordshire are earning almost £90 a week less than men, new figures have shown.

Data from the Office for National Statistics' annual Survey of Hours and Earnings show the widening pay gap between the sexes across the region. On average men who work full time take home gross pay of £507.60.

This figure is equal to a total of £87.78 more than female workers.

The figures show that the gap is greatest in Staffordshire, where men earn a whopping £119.10 a week more than women.

They also reveal that women in Wolverhampton are in the bottom two per cent of earners in the country, picking up an average of £379.10 compared to men who take home £465.40.

And the gap has widened over the last 12 months according to the figures, with men's wages increasing more than 0.5 per cent above those of women.

The difference flies in the face of the national trend, which shows that in April women's wages were 9.4 per cent below those of men, compared with 10 per cent the previous year.

Trade Union bosses have described the figures as 'shocking' and say some areas in the region are 'going backwards' when it comes to bridging the gender pay gap.

Nick Kelleher, secretary of the Wolverhampton and Bilston TUC, said: "Wolverhampton council has made progress over the last few years in terms of reducing the pay gap between men and women."

"But unfortunately because of public sector cuts a lot of jobs have now gone into the private sector. In an area such as care, which traditionally employs predominantly women, this means lower wages."

"It's shocking to see we now appear to be going backwards."

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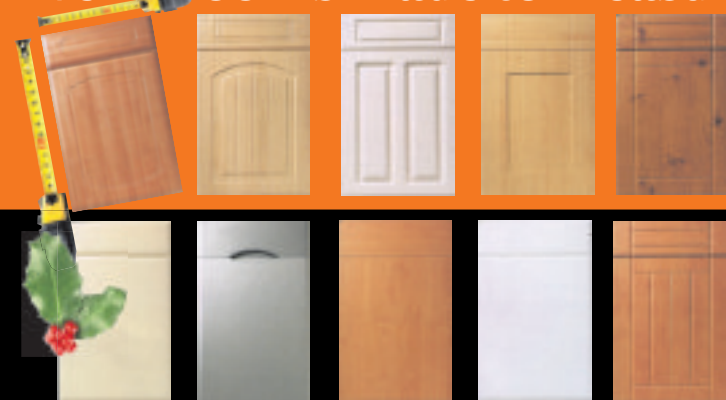
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Widows join veterans to receive top honour

'I WAS just another soldier doing his job really' - Second World War veteran Frank Corbett humbly remembers his time fighting in Normandy.

The 95-year-old from Walsall was recently given the Légion d'Honneur medal, France's highest decoration to recognise individual efforts, regardless of where they are born.

Mr Corbett, along with fellow Walsall veterans Sam Broadhurst, Ron Davies and Gordon Poole, were among the 400 people outside France to be given the award this year.

While Mr Corbett and Mr Broadhurst received theirs, Dot Davies and Eileen Poole were presented with the medals on behalf of their late husbands. The four people came together to mark the occasion at a monthly meeting of the Normandy Veterans Amalgamation group, held at Bloxwich's Victoria Club.

Superheroes

Mr Corbett, 94, from Bloxwich, was a corporal in the seventh battalion of the South Staffordshire regiment from 1939 to 1946.

After receiving his medal, he said: "I never expected anything like this, it was a big surprise to me."

"It is lovely to think people think of you like this, as a hero. I was just another soldier doing his job really. The medal itself is beautiful but it came with a lovely letter, thanking us for saving so many lives, which is worth just as much to me. It is as though they think of us as superheroes."

Mrs Poole, who was married to Gordon for 65 years, said she was 'very proud' of her husband but him receiving the award was tinged with sadness.

Mr Poole died in September this year, aged 89, just a short time before he was able to receive the award for himself.

Mrs Poole, of Cnack, said: "I am very proud of him. I was always proud of him but I am very sad he is not here to hold the award himself."

She said her husband would have been delighted with the medal. Mr Poole volunteered at the age of 17.

Mrs Poole said: Mrs Poole said her husband's duties had been sending vital messages between airfields and



Gordon Poole, who died in September



Honoured - the late Ron Davies



Eileen Poole, Normandy veterans Sam Broadhurst, Frank Corbett and Dot Davies

formed from the disbanded Normandy Veterans Association, are organised by Ron Smith, 83, from Great Wyrley.

He said: "I was chosen to be chairman of the Normandy Veterans Amalgamation by the others because I am a bit younger, I wasn't a Normandy veteran myself. We lost Ron and Gordon earlier this year, both were truly sad losses. Each deserved their honour."

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Just the ticket for Julie's dedication



Julie McKirdy, receives her British Empire Medal from Deputy Lord Lieutenant Simon Topman for her services

A DEDICATED library worker has been honoured with a British Empire Medal for her 37 years of service.

Julie McKirdy has become a well-known face at Thimblemill Library in Bearwood – and was nominated for her award by colleagues and friends.

More than 400 people packed out the library to pay tribute to her, and watch Deputy Lord Lieutenant Simon Topman present her with the medal.

Miss McKirdy, aged 53, said that the ceremony had left her feeling extremely honoured and overcome. "It was such an amazing afternoon and I was blown away by the amount of people who turned out for the presentation," she said.

"When I first found out that I would be receiving the medal in June, I was asked whether I would like to be presented with it over a nice lunch or at a stately home but I knew straight away that there was only one place I wanted it to be at – and that was the library."

Miss McKirdy first started work at Smethwick Library when she left school and moved across to Thimblemill, covering the children's section, in 1978. She now works as a library supervisor as well as organising music and theatre events.

Shop run by volunteers at hospital set to shut

A POPULAR shop at Sandwell Hospital will shut after 30 years of being run by volunteers. The Royal Voluntary Shop sells newspapers, greetings cards and food.

However, it is being replaced with a facility managed by the health trust. The shop has around 20 members of voluntarily staff, with three full time employees.

As well as working in the shop itself, the staff also take a trolley around wards for patients that cannot walk very far.

After a recent meeting, staff were told the shop would be closing in January.

Full details of what exactly will replace the shop have not yet been revealed but NHS bosses said they wanted to manage their own service in the future.

The closure has been met with shock by volunteers who say the shop is a vital part of the hospital for both visitors and patients. But hospital bosses insist the volunteers should not feel rejected, assuring them they are still important to the running of the site.

David Payne, aged 58, from Stone Cross, has been volunteering for nearly four years and is bitterly disappointed by the decision. He said: "I don't agree with the

decision at all. I completely understand finances for hospitals are being cut all over the country but I feel this is a vital service being lost for Sandwell.

"Patients are stuck in beds all day every day and we do our best to cheer them up.

"Only if it's for a few minutes, we create a real difference. Some patients look forward to seeing what we have on offer on the trolley – something as small as that is invaluable to their time as a patient."

Chief nurse Colin Ovington confirmed the closure of the shop and thanked the Royal Voluntary Service for all of their hard work.

He said: "We would like to acknowledge their significant contribution and thank each volunteer for their commitment."

By Simon Stone

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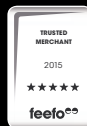
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Following the yellow brick road in the Wizard of Oz

Festive fun for all at Blue Coat



Pupils enjoying a proper festive singing treat



Musical youngsters get into the swing of things with orchestral accompaniment

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

THE mission statement at Blue Coat C E Infant and Junior Schools' Federation is: Believe, Celebrate, Succeed, and this is demonstrated by the enthusiastic and positive approach to learning shown by the children throughout the two schools.

Children are of course particularly excited at this time of year and preparations are currently underway at both schools to ensure the Blue Coat children and community enjoy a fabulously festive end of term.

The Blue Coat Federation is made up of the infant and junior schools, with 650 children attending altogether from Nursery to Year 6.

The schools work hard to ensure that all the pupils have an active role to play in the festivities.

The Christmas Bazaar marks the start of the Christmas events.

There will be an infant production and the juniors will present two musical concerts with children playing a wide range of instruments including steel pans, violins, trumpets and flutes!

Each school has a choir and they will be performing at a range of events and making visits to local homes for the elderly as well as other venues.

Recognised

The term ends with the Christmas Service at St Matthew's Church attended by all the children from both schools, parents and guests.

The two schools are recognised for the high standards they achieve by Ofsted and both schools have received national awards for their high quality provision including a Leading Aspect Award, a Pupil Premium Award and the Gold Sports Mark.

Both schools are committed to excellent learning opportunities for



Another sparkling performance with a Christmassy feel to it

all pupils and the Christmas activities are part of a curriculum that is carefully planned to be exciting and engaging for every child.

There are excellent extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities in both schools.

These include: art, sewing, orchestra, dance, choir, drama and many sports teams.

The schools are two of the oldest in Walsall and both have a strong Christian ethos.

The schools serve a multi-faith community and the curriculum is designed to develop a full understanding and respect for all cultures and beliefs.

Executive Head of the Federa-

tion, Anthony Orlik, said: "One of the things that makes Blue Coat very special is the wide variety of faith and cultural backgrounds of our pupils."

"The Blue Coat children love coming to school and love learning."

"This is due to the hard and skilful work of the staff to provide an exciting curriculum which reflects our pupils' interests and the skills they need."

"We know that children learn best if they enjoy their lessons and we are proud of the great progress the Blue Coat children make as a result of the great teaching they receive."

Blue Coat Infant and Junior Schools' Federation

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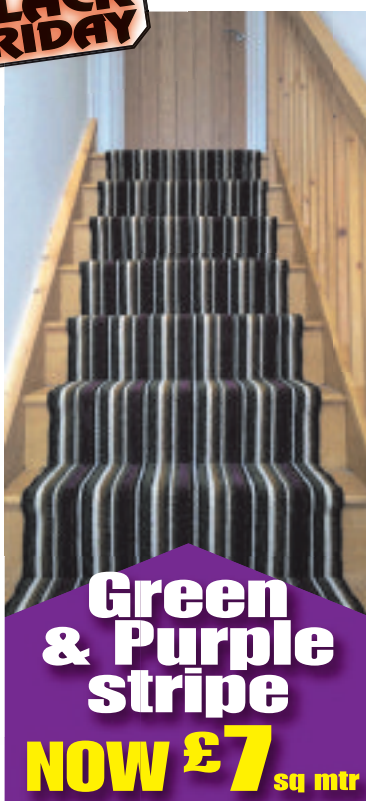
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MP calls for action over pub sites

AN MP says Walsall Council needs to take better control over two former pub sites on a Bloxwich estate.

David Winnick, MP for Walsall North, has urged the authority to work with the owners of the former Eagle and Leathern Bottle pubs on the Mossley estate, Bloxwich. The Leathern Bottle was pulled down three years ago, but its site in Cresswell Crescent has still not been cleared, while the Eagle pub on the same road has been partly demolished.

Mr Winnick said Walsall council should 'strongly urge' the site owners to finish the job. "The discussions seem to go on endlessly between the council and the owners over the Eagle," he said. "It was some time ago that I was informed about possible redevelopment of the site for residential use, but clearly there has been no progress at all. I would say it is about time a decision is made which would put pressure on those involved."



Sandwell Council boss Darren Cooper, Sajid Javid, George Osborne and Solihull Council's Bob Sleigh

Deal will put region 'on the world stage'

THE devolution deal that will see the West Midlands have its own elected mayor will give the region 'an even stronger presence on the world stage', the Chancellor says.

George Osborne was in Coventry last week to announce £1 billion of Government investment will be provided to create the West Midlands Combined Authority.

Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton have all signed up to be full members, while three Local Enterprise Partnerships and various district councils will be involved on a non-constituent basis. As part of the deal a metro-mayor will be elected

for the region in 2017. The post will hold a major influence over a host of strategic policy areas, including transport, housing and health.

Speaking at an event at the Institute for Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, Mr Osborne said: "Big successful city areas in the world have elected mayors."

"What we are doing is saying let's create a combined authority, let's give it powers over things like strategic planning, transport and let's put someone in charge elected by local people, accountable to local people and making sure the West Midlands has an even stronger presence on the world stage."

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Delight as mother is now free of cancer

A MOTHER from Wolverhampton who fought for her life after contracting a rare cancer during pregnancy has described her relief at being given the all clear.

Mother-of-three Deborah Nabbs, aged 36, said she was now looking forward to Christmas so her children could have their mother back. Deborah was diagnosed with choriocarcinoma just eight weeks after giving birth to Lewis.

Doctors told her that cells left behind after a pregnancy had become cancerous and the disease had spread to her lungs.

She underwent gruelling treatment including intense chemotherapy, spent time in isolation and had a full hysterectomy. She has now been told she is cancer free and Lewis, 21 months, is fit and healthy.

She said: "After giving birth to Lewis I was in complete shock to be diagnosed with such a rare pregnancy related cancer, it's every mum's worst nightmare."

Crumbling

"Due to the cancer being connected to the placenta as well doctors thought Lewis could have it, but thankfully he was fine."

"My world came crumbling down, but I was determined to beat the disease."

Within weeks of the birth last February, she began haemorrhaging and lost blood clots the size of Easter eggs. Doctors believed some of her placenta still remained so they performed surgery to remove it.

When she continued to lose blood, tests revealed she in fact had choriocarcinoma, which affects less than 20 women each year in the UK.

Report by Rob Cox

"My treatment was horrific," she said. "I started invasive chemotherapy which caused my hair loss. I went on to try many types of chemotherapy drugs but none of them seemed to work so I underwent a full hysterectomy."

"But once I was strong enough, I was considered for high dose chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant. This was definitely the most difficult stage of my treatment as I didn't catch any bugs. I was a long way from home and my children were not allowed to visit."

"I'm just glad to be back home now and I can finally enjoy Christmas this year with my boys and they have their mum back."

Following her initial diagnosis Deborah was referred to Weston Park Hospital in Sheffield where she received the rest of her treatment.

Kam Singh, a lead Clinical Nurse Specialist at the hospital said: "Debbie is an incredible woman who underwent an extremely difficult and challenging 14 months of treatment."

"It has been an absolute honour to get to know her and the team wish her all the best for the future."

Car park repairs budget may be hit

MAINTENANCE of car parks in Walsall will be slashed as part of cuts at the borough's cash-strapped council.

A total of £15,000 will be taken from the car park budget despite concerns it could present a negative image of the town, under latest budget plans. Bosses will look to reduce the council's car park maintenance budget to £25,000, which would have to cover repair costs, such as surfacing and lighting, cleaning, general damage and destruction.

Currently, the council operates 59 car parks across the borough. A report on the plans reads: "Reduced maintenance could result in a reduction in the cleanliness, appearance and safety of the car parks. This would present a negative image of the borough to our car park customers when compared with current arrangements."

Walsall Council leader Mike Bird said: "We believe we can accommodate this small reduction in finances for car park maintenance by being a little more prudent."

"Many local readers wait in eager anticipation for the next edition of a book on our town. Local authors should be celebrated for their literary works."

Parents left to fight for goods as firm sinks



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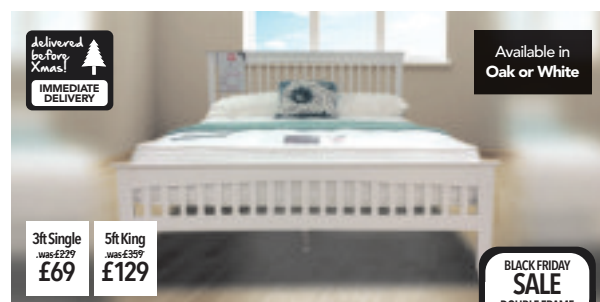


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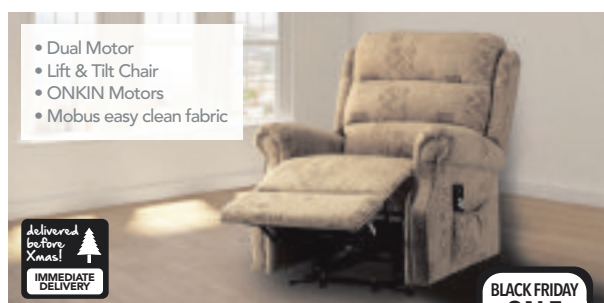
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24 Girl, 3, unhurt after collision

The Chronicle Thursday, November 26, 2015

A THREE-year-old girl escaped unhurt from a head-on smash in Coseley unscathed last weekend.

Fire, ambulance and police crews were called to Central Drive in Coseley at 6.30pm on Saturday to reports of a two-car collision.

The smash left both vehicles with significant front-end damage, while two male drivers were taken to hospital.

The three-year-old girl, who was in one of the vehicles, was checked for injuries but had suffered none and was left in the care of her mother. The crash caused the road to be closed until 9.30pm.

Earlier, a man escaped with minor injuries after being cut free from his car after crashing into a lamppost.

The incident happened on Bilston Road, Ettingshall, shortly before 3.30am and the man was trapped for around 30 minutes.

A man also crashed into a railing on Wilenhall Road, Wolverhampton, in the early hours of Sunday morning, but refused hospital treatment having suffered only minor injuries.

Jailed drug dealer loses his appeal against conviction

A MAN jailed after police rumbled a drug dealing plot centred on a motorway hotel has lost an appeal against his conviction.

Events promoter Adib Samira Asfour, aged 27, of Kinlet Close, Wolverhampton, was one of three people locked away after police pounced following a handover in October 2013.

He was jailed for 10 years at Stafford Crown Court in February after he was found guilty of plotting to supply MDMA.

He appealed against his conviction, but his case was thrown out by Lady Justice Sharp. Giving judgment at London's Court of Appeal, she said: "His role in the conspiracy was a significant one. We think it is not arguable that a sentence of 10 years is arguable either manifestly excessive or wrong in principle."

REPORT BY ADAM BURLING

The court heard the plot was smashed after Staffordshire Police received a tip from counterparts in the West Mercia force. Accomplices Leah Parkes and Charles Hendrie, who had booked a room in the hotel on the M6, were stopped as they drove away.

Part of the 34kg haul was recovered in a car boot by police at the Hilton Park services, near junction 11 of the M6 at Cannock, while more was found in a room in Holiday Inn, Stafford.

A targeted stop-check by Central Motorway Police Group officers on the M6 southbound, between junctions 11 and 10A, found the suitcase of drugs in the boot. It contained 16 packages of MDMA and both Hendrie and Parkes were arrested. CCTV footage showed Asfour

and another unidentified man turning up empty-handed and going into the room, before leaving with a bag.

Prosecutors said the bag they had picked up was likely to have contained three more kilos of the drug.

Investigation of mobile phones also produced evidence that suggested Asfour was involved in drug dealing. Lawyers for Asfour argued that his trial should have been stopped before the jury even began to consider his case.

But Lady Justice Sharp said Asfour's arrival at the hotel empty-handed and then leaving with the bag supported the prosecution case that he was guilty. And the sheer amount of drugs involved in the wider conspiracy justified the 10-year sentence. Parkes and Hendrie, both from Bury, were refused permission to appeal their respective seven and 10-year sentences.

Neighbour nabs burglary suspect

A SUSPECTED burglar was arrested after a quick-thinking neighbour chased and caught him in Tettenhall.

A woman returned home from work at around 5pm last Thursday and spotted two burglars inside her Manor Street home. She immediately alerted her neighbours who dialled 999.

The burglars, who took a substantial sum of cash, are believed to have been disturbed and escaped over back gardens. But while waiting for the police to arrive the woman noticed a man walking along the street who she suspected had been one of the culprits.

A neighbour chased and caught him, holding on to him until police arrived a few minutes later.

A man, aged 29 from Bilston, was arrested on suspicion of burglary and is currently in police custody.

Police are working to trace the other man involved. Anyone with information is urged to call West Midlands Police on 101.

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Christmas in Walsall



Get the festive low-down on events – see page 3

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Fabulous gifts are all under one roof

A new department store, special gifts and plenty of choice makes the Saddlers Shopping Centre an ideal place to pick up all your Christmas shopping.

Having added T J Hughes to its existing retailer list there is so much more to choose from with 30,000 sq ft full of a fantastic range of goods including everything for the home, furniture, supplies for the garden and outdoors, beds and bedding, travel, electricals, ladies and men's fashion, fragrances, beauty products and toys and games.

The most recent success is the new NHS Walk-in-Centre on Bridgeman Street let which is nearing completion and will open its doors in the middle of January, 2016.

T J Hughes sits alongside F Hinds Jewellers which is relatively new to the centre. Customers can get that perfect gift for someone special at F. Hinds and Warren James jewellers.

There is plenty of fashion choice in the centre for both men and women.

Lashious Beauty is the ideal spot for great beauty care with everything from eyebrow threading and nail care to massages and treatments for men and gift vouchers too.

Anyone wanting a Christmas outfit for their children this year can visit Ace Clothing on the lower floor and pick up some top togs.

Customers can get all their Christ-



There is so much choice for customers at the Saddlers Shopping Centre

mas foods from Marks & Spencer including the turkey, hampers and great party food selections for both Christmas and New Year alongside a fantastic range of ladies and men's fashion as well as Christmas gifts and more.

Shoppers can take a break from shopping and get a coffee in Costa Coffee on the first floor as well as Marks & Spencer's café on the second.

Great food is on offer too on the lower floor with Burger King now open alongside Subway, Greggs and Oliver Adams on the lower floor.

Look out for Santa in the centre on certain dates throughout December as the Saddlers Centre is working in partnership with the Walsall Rotary Club again this year.

Santa will be in his sleigh outside of Poundland on December Friday and Saturday 4, 5, 11 and 12.

Check out the website at www.saddlers-shopping.com for the centre's Christmas competition for a chance to win a once in a lifetime experience for Christmas or enter the selfie competition.



Customer service and sound advice comes first at Alan Warwick's traditional butcher's in Walsall

Butcher's service is second to none

ALAN Warwick's butchers in Walsall opened 12 months ago, in the Victorian Arcade-Walsall.

Since opening and refitting the shop, business has gone from strength-to-strength.

This has happened by sourcing top quality meat and selling it as competitively priced as possible, undercutting

the supermarkets and other competitors. The team also believes in providing top quality service and expert advice on meat, something supermarkets are unable to offer.

Passionate

All staff are passionate about their jobs and this is paramount as the shop is only as good as the staff it employs.

When customers visit, the aim is for

customers to get the 'feel good factor' and are spoken to on a one-to-one basis, as they are the most important people to the business. No customers means no business.

Most people's perception of the high street is that they are dying, but the staff at Alan Warwick's like to think that they are bucking the trend.

Why not come to the shop in Walsall and see for yourself?

Christmas 2015 - Trading Hours

THURSDAYS - LATE NIGHTS		
Thursday	10 December	9am - 7pm
Thursday	17 December	9am - 7pm

SUNDAYS		
Sunday	Trading (as normal)	10.30am - 4.30pm

Xmas Trading Hours from:-		
Monday	14 December	9am - 5.30pm
Tuesday	15 December	9am - 5.30pm
Wednesday	16 December	9am - 5.30pm
Thursday	17 December	9am - 7pm
Friday	18 December	9am - 5.30pm
Saturday	19 December	9am - 5.30pm
Sunday	20 December	10.30am - 4.30pm
Monday	21 December	9am - 7pm
Tuesday	22 December	9am - 7pm
Wednesday	23 December	9am - 7pm
Thursday	24 December	9am - 5pm
Friday	25 December	CHRISTMAS DAY - CENTRE CLOSED
Saturday	26 December	Boxing Day 9am - 5.30pm
Sunday	27 December	10.30am - 4.30pm
Monday	28 December	10am - 5pm (Bank Holiday)
Tuesday	29 December	9am - 5.30pm
Wednesday	30 December	9am - 5.30pm
Thursday	31 December	NEW YEARS EVE 9am - 5pm
Friday	1 January 2016	CENTRE CLOSED
Saturday	2 January 2016	Normal Trading Resumes

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Follow Us On

Get in the festive spirit with market and lights switch-on



Primary school choirs will be in competition on December 5, noon-2pm

Pick up everything you need for the festive season from food to special gift ideas

Walsall Christmas market has a fantastic reputation

WALSALL town centre will be celebrating the start of the Christmas season with the return of the traditional Thursday evening Christmas event.

The event will take place on Thursday, December 3 between 4pm and 7pm on The Bridge.

All activities are free and will include three hours of on-stage entertainment, children's fairground rides, face painting and a 40ft bouncy slide.

Children can have their photographs taken with Santa on his sleigh courtesy of Walsall Rotary and Armitage Birds of Prey Centre will bring along a display of birds of prey including owls that featured in the Harry Potter films.

Alongside the activities there will be a 38-stall Christmas market selling everything you'll ever need for Christmas plus caterers serving up delicious food including hot roast chestnuts, keeping you fully refreshed for the celebrations.

To support the start of late night shopping and to help anyone attending the event, from 4pm free parking will be available on all council

off-street car parks. Charges will still apply to on-street parking and on private car parks such as the Saddlers Centre.

A big thank you goes out to HSBC Bank for providing full sponsorship for new lights to be hung in the trees surrounding the fountain on The Bridge.

Whilst the main town centre and Christmas tree lights will already be switched on, the new lights on The Bridge will be lit at the event at 7pm.

For customers of HSBC, don't forget that a temporary branch is located on Gallery Square

while work is carried out to their unit on The Bridge. For updates on the event and on who will be trading 'Like' Walsall Town Centre on Facebook. For the second year in a row the New Art Gallery will be hosting the final of the Free Radio Christmas Stars choir competition.

Go along to see the three best primary school choirs from across the Black Country and Shropshire as they vie to be crowned Christmas Stars Champions 2015.

The event is being held on Saturday, December 5 between 12 noon and 2pm.

Walsall's 800 year old market operates five

days a week (excluding Thursdays and Sundays), for fresh food and gift requirements don't forget to pay our friendly traders a visit.

To cater for all your last minute shopping needs Walsall market will be operating an additional trading day on Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24.

The market will then be closed from Friday, December 25 to Tuesday, December 29 (inclusive) and will open Wednesday, December 30 and will be closed on New Year's Day before returning to normal trading on Saturday, January 2.

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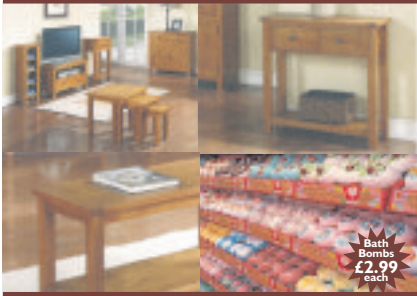


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CHRISTMAS IN WALSALL

Time to sparkle at jewellers

STIRLINGS is now celebrating its third Christmas in its new shop.

Although this will be the 122nd festive season that Stirlings has served Walsall from the old shop in the Victorian arcade and the seventh since the Allen family bought the business.

Motto

There have been many changes over the years but one constant remains is the motto: "Long after the price has been forgotten the quality remains".

The management at Stirlings feel the reason is is still around today is because the business holds the

same principle of 'quality before price' that John Stirling started out with back in 1893.

This Christmas, as many before, an extensive range of jewellery is being offered across the price spectrum from £6 sterling silver earrings to an £8,000 pink sapphire collarlet and more for special occasions.

From pre-loved heritage goods to their new and bespoke pieces, all staff provide service with a smile and helpful advice for those unsure what they are looking for.

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CHRISTMAS IN WALSALL

Generations of family know how

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The Berekis family at Valley Nurseries & Garden Centre is grateful for the continued support they have received over the years.

For those that don't know, Mr and Mrs Berekis started the garden centre in 1977 and shortly after began selling Christmas trees of a high standard.

Today, 38 years later the business is run mainly by brothers Alex and Robert, with their parents still on site almost daily.

There are three different standards in Christmas trees available to buy in the UK, the cheapest are 'thirds' which have been planted with little space to grow and almost no care whilst growing, resulting in poor quality and misshapen trees.

The next grades are called 'standards', with more growing space and a small amount of cultivation, resulting in a somewhat better tree.

Valley Nurseries sells the best grade premium trees which have the exact amount of growing space, also lots of care and attention from growers with decades of experience in cultivating beautiful Christmas trees.

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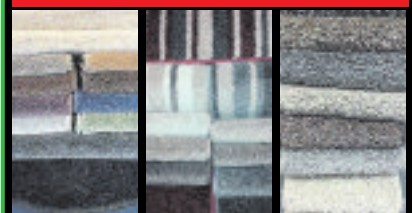
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Whether it be a wedding, an anniversary or a birthday, The Saddlers Club can cater for the 'John Wilson Suite' and 'Ken Morrall Lounge' are also available to hire for daytime meetings, seminars, christenings or funerals wakes.

In addition to having rooms for hire, The Saddlers Club has a varied entertainment programme ranging from a quiz and top vocal artist on Sunday evenings, to groups and shows on Friday/Saturday nights. On a match day, The Saddlers Club is the place to meet up with family and friends to enjoy a drink and maybe something to eat before the game, then catching up with other results as the traffic clears after the game. After all, that's why the club started over 50 years ago. Wherever your interest lie; football, entertainment or simply a drink with your friends, The Saddlers Club caters for all.

There are darts and domino teams, along with a pool table and prices are competitive with similar pubs/clubs in the area. New members will be welcome in the New Year, just visit the website for weekend events listings at www.thesaddlersclubwalsall.com or e-mail thesaddlersclub@aol.com for further information.



An ideal venue with plenty of space and competitive pricing



A great venue for a various range of interests and entertainment



The cast of Jack and the Beanstalk at Lichfield Garrick Theatre, including Graham Cole as Hemlock, Ian Adams as Dame Mary Trott and Tony Stansfield as King Percival

The pantyou've 'bean' waiting for

THE classic tale of Jack and the Beanstalk will be magically brought to life in the Lichfield Garrick's own giant family pantomime.

This year, the much loved Graham Cole, best known for his role as PC Tony Stamp in the ITV police drama, The Bill, takes on the role of Hemlock, the Giant's 'evil' henchman.

Graham is a familiar face to the Lichfield audience, having performed as Scrooge in 2011/12's A Christmas Carol. Graham commented: "I'm genuinely excited and delighted to be asked back to play the villain in Jack and the

Beanstalk. I'm looking forward to working with Ian Adams and the talented team at the Garrick again. The positive reaction from the Lichfield audiences to my role as Scrooge in A Christmas Carol has had a defining effect on me. I love playing the intimacy of the Lichfield Garrick, and once again I will have the chance to look children right in the eye and say 'Boo Me'..... 'If you dare!'"

The action takes place in the good old Wild West where Jack and his mother struggle to make ends meet.

Wayward Jack, keen to find fortune trades his last dime for a handful of magic beans in the hope that his dreams will come true.

Will Jack find his fortune in the land of opportunity? Will the beans amount

to anything more than a small case- role? Will Jack find himself dealing with a gigantic problem?

With singing and dancing, stunning costumes and scenery, a tap dancing 'Daisy the Cow', a team of 'Tempest Trolley Dolls', live music and plenty of audience participation, Jack and the Beanstalk promises to be a festive treat for all the family. Jack and the Beanstalk runs at the Lichfield Garrick from Thursday, December 3 to Sunday, January 3, with a variety of schools, matinee and evening performances.

Ticket prices start from £12.50 for children and £21.50 for adults. To book your tickets call the Box Office on 01543 412121 or visit the website www.lichfieldgarrick.com



THE SADDLERS CLUB

Walsall Football Supporters Club, Bescot Crescent, Walsall, West Midlands WS1 4TS

Tel: 01922 649840

www.thesaddlersclubwalsall.com
email: thesaddlersclub@aol.com

CHRISTMAS WEEK ENTERTAINMENT

Saturday 19th December

"GOT THE T-SHIRT"

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Members £4, Guests £6, Child £2

Saturday 26th December

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Members £3, Guests £5, Child £2

Thursday 30th December

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The market with St Peter's Church in background



Wolverhampton Market Hall circa 1952



Queen Square, Wolverhampton, as it looked in the 1920s

Reliving atmosphere of busy market day

AT the top of Mitre Fold you came face to face with the large and glorious 1850s Retail Market, of grey brick and stone.

The atmosphere in here on a busy market day was something tangible. Next to it was the Market Patch, with its open stalls. Fronting Wulfruna Street was the Wholesale Market, of red brick and yellow terracotta, erected around the turn of the 20th century.

In North Street was a row of shops, which included a post office and Mr Reid's establishment for gentlemen's hairdressing and the sale and repair of umbrellas.

Walking back along North Street, around the corner in Darlington Street was the chemist's we used - Gibson's - and I recollect lots of dark wood and large old-fashioned bottles of different coloured glass on shelves. Where North Street opened out into Queen Square you would be facing the imposing façade of the Queen's Arcade, with two entrances, the

MEMORY LANE

By Tony Perry

two elegant Edwardian arcades meeting under a glazed dome. Here was Stanley Gibbons stamp-collecting shop.

In Queen Square at the corner of Lichfield Street above a cake shop, where the HSBC Bank is now, was the Café Royal, and two doors away the Queen's Picture House provided a restaurant facility upstairs.

Where the Halifax is now, Joe Lyons' cafeteria provided refreshments at everyday prices, with extra accommodation at the back. I distinctly recall Lyons' gave me my first experience of a ring doughnut, covered in a glaze of icing.

The building which was the Visitor Information Centre was then a select restaurant called Reynolds', cakes and bread at the front, and dining rooms upstairs. The shop at the corner of Exchange Street, was Lipton's grocery store, and you could smell their powerful cheeses

long before you reached the door. Walking down Victoria Street you passed the early Victorian façade of the Star and Garter Hotel. Below was Bedford Williams, where we would go to buy linen.

Here my mother would hand money to an assistant, who would write a note, and put the note and money inside a small metal tube into one of many pipes which travelled around the store, and it would disappear. Minutes later it would return with the necessary change.

At the side of Bedford Williams, Farmer's Fold led past small, old, cottage style buildings with shops, to reach John Street. On the opposite side of Victoria Street was Beatties, whose toy department in the basement was always popular, and where in December there would be a visit to see Father Christmas.

Taken from Of the River People by Anthony Perry (Brewin Books, £9.95), available at Ashwoods, Tettenhall Post Office, Archives at Molineux House, Mogul Diamonds, St Peter's Church and other bookshops.



Tony with Santa at Beatties department around 1956



Tony Perry with his mother in Wolverhampton

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Classic ballet – Page 21



Comedy queen

Sarah Millican – Page 21

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Genting Arena, B'ham

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Visit www.gentingarena.co.uk

Courtney Barnett



Tonight, 7pm
Wulfrun Hall, W'ton

This indie rock singer-songwriter from Melbourne has been a sensation in Australia with her debut album Sometimes I Sit and Think, and Sometimes I Just Sit, recorded in just 10 days.
Visit www.wolvescivic.co.uk

White Christmas



Tuesday - Dec 3
Grand Theatre, W'ton

Based on the timeless classic film starring Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye, Rosemary Clooney and Vera Ellen, this heart-warming musical features 17 unforgettable Irving Berlin tunes.
Visit www.grandtheatre.co.uk

Paul Gascoigne



Monday, 7pm
Civic Hall, W'ton

Listen to footballing hero Gazza talk about his career highs and lows, both on and off the field, when he was playing for England and Tottenham Hotspur.
Visit www.wolvescivic.co.uk

POP & ROCK

Joe Brown
Sat at 8pm, £28.50
Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ.
Call 0121 780 3333

The Prodigy
Thu at 6pm, £28.20 - £40.20
Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham, B1 2AA.
Call 0121 780 4141

Beartooth
Sat at 7pm, £10
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

The Jack Tars
Wed at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

Midlands Metal Crusade
Sat at 7pm, £8.80
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms, WV1 1RQ. Call 0870 320 7000

The Counterfeit Stones
Sat at 7.30pm, £13 - £15
The Robin 2 Hotel, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

China Crisis
Sun at 8pm, £15 - £16
The Robin 2, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

Darkside: Pink Floyd Show
Sat at 7pm, £15
Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall, WV1 1RQ. Call 0870 320 7000

Paul Weller
Fri at 8pm, £38
Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham, B1 2AA.
Call 0121 780 4141

Slayer
Fri at 6.30pm, £39.50
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

Faithless
Wed at 6pm, £35.70
Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham, B1 2AA.
Call 0121 780 4141

The Waterboys
Mon at 7.30pm, £28.50 - £32.50
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Courtney Barnett
Fri at 7pm, £15
Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall, WV1 1RQ. Call 0870 320 7000

Orange Goblin: 20th Anniversary Tour
Thu at 7pm, £15
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms, WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

Dodgy
Fri at 7pm, £16.50
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms, WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

John Otway
Thu at 7.30pm - 11pm, £10
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7JZ.
Call 0844 870 0000

Danni Nicholls
Fri at 8.30pm,
Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge, DY8 3TB.
Call 01384 374410

Green Jelly
Sun at 7pm,
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms, WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

The Replicas
Fri at 8pm,
The River Rooms, Stourbridge, DY8 1JN. Call 01384 397177

Guy Garvey
Thu at 7pm,
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

Olly Murs Tribute
Tue at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

Josh Groban
Sun at 8pm, £50
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Free Radio Live 2015
Sat at 7pm, £38.10 - £42.50
Genting Arena, Birmingham, B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

Ultra 90's: 90s Dance Tribute
Sat - Sun at 7.30pm - 2am, £9
The River Rooms, Stourbridge, DY8 1JN. Call 01384 397177

The Dreaming Tree
Fri at 8pm, £5
Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, WV1 4AN.
Call 01902 572090

Mumford And Sons
Mon at 12am,
Genting Arena, Birmingham, B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

Nazareth
Thu at 8.30pm, £22
The Robin 2, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

The Courteeners
Thu at 7pm, £22.50
Wolverhampton Civic Hall, WV1 1RQ. Call 0870 320 7000

Mainly Madness
Fri at 7.30pm, £10 - £12
The Robin 2, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

XSLF
Fri - Sat at 8pm - 1am,
The Boars Head, Kidderminster, DY10 1EW. Call 01562 861870

Ruby Ridge
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Call 0844 870 0000

Metreenco Band
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The Grapes
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Call 07989 174631

FOLK & ACOUSTIC

Irish Music Session
Wed at 8pm,
Katie Fitzgerald's, Wollaston, Stourbridge, DY8 3TB.
Call 01384 374410

Nick Harper
Fri at 8pm - 11pm, £13.25
The Glee Club, Birmingham, B5 4TD.
Call 0871 472 0400

CLASSICAL & OTHER MUSIC

CSO 2015-16: Beethoven's Eroica
Wed at 2.15pm, Thu at 2.15pm, £12.50 - £45
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

Steve Reich's Drumming
Tue at 6pm, £4 - £6.50
Birmingham Conservatoire, Birmingham City University, B3 3HG.
Call 0121 331 5901

Performance Platform: Tasmin Little
Tue at 1.05pm - 2pm,
Birmingham Conservatoire, Birmingham City University, B3 3HG.
Call 0121 331 5901

The 2015 Birmingham International Tattoo
Sat at 6pm, Sun at 2pm, £17.20 - £28.20
Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham, B1 2AA.
Call 0121 780 4141

CSO 2015-16 Friday Night Classics: James Bond
Fri at 7.30pm, £12.50 - £47
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

THEATRE

Birmingham Royal Ballet: The Nutcracker
Sun at 1pm, Tue at 2pm, 7.30pm, Wed at 7.30pm, Thu at 2pm, 7.30pm, £19 - £56
Birmingham Hippodrome, B5 4TB.
Call 0844 338 5000

Beryl
Fri at 2.45pm, 7.45pm, Sat at 7.45pm, £17 - £20
Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EP.
Call 0121 236 4455

Dancing Queen
Sat at 7.30pm,
Palace Theatre, Redditch, B98 8AE. Call 01527 65203

The Lion The Witch And The Wardrobe
Fri at 7pm, Sat at 2pm, 7pm, Mon at 7pm, Thu at 10.15am, 2.30pm, £7.50 - £35
Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EP.
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Guys And Dolls
Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm, 7.30pm, Mon at 7.30pm, Tue at 7.30pm, Wed at 2.30pm, 7.30pm, Thu at 7.30pm, £15 - £47.50
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DS.
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Treasure Island
Fri at 10.15am, 1.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm, 7pm, Sun at 1pm, 5pm, Tue at 10.15am, 1.30pm, Wed at 10.15am, 1.30pm, Thu at 10.15am, 1.30pm,
The Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DY.
Call 0121 605 5116

White Christmas: South Staffs Musical Theatre Company
Tue at 7.30pm, Wed at 2.30pm, 7.30pm, Thu at 7.30pm, £10 - £19.50
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE.
Call 01902 573320

Yvette
Wed at 7.30pm,
Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, WV1 4AN.
Call 01902 572090

A Murder Is Announced
Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm, 7.30pm, £15.50 - £26
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE.
Call 01902 573320

We're Going On A Bear Hunt: Little Angel Theatre (Over 2s)
Fri at 10.30am, 1.30pm, Sat at 10.30am, 2pm, Sun at 10.30am, 2pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

COMEDY

Stewart Francis: Pun Gent
Thu at 8pm - 10.30pm, £17.50
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Sarah Millican: Outsider
Fri at 8pm, Sat at 8pm, Sun at 8pm, £25 - £26
Wolverhampton Civic Hall, WV1 1RQ. Call 0870 320 7000

Jeremy Hardy
Fri at 8pm,
Artrix, Bromsgrove, B61 1PQ.
Call 01527 577330

Dave Gorman: Gets Straight To The Point (The PowerPoint)
Sun at 7pm - 8pm, 8pm, £24
Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall, WV1 1RQ. Call 0870 320 7000

Sean McLoughlin: Whatever It Takes
Sun at 8.15pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham, B5 4TD. Call 0871 472 0400

TALKS

Blofeld & Baxter: Rogues On The Road
Fri at 7.30pm, £20.35
mac, Cannon Hill Road, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

An Audience With "Gazza" Paul Gascoigne
Mon at 7pm - 11.30pm, £20 - £100
Wolverhampton Civic Hall, WV1 1RQ. Call 0870 320 7000

ART EXHIBITIONS

This Is Not A Joke
Fri, Sat at 10am - 5pm,
Mon - Thu at 10am - 5pm
Wolverhampton Art Gallery, WV1 1DU.
Call 01902 552055

Jessica Holt
Fri, Sat at 10am - 5pm,
Sun at 12pm - 4pm,
Tue at 10am - 5pm
The New Art Gallery Walsall, WS2 8LG. Call 01922 654400

OTHER EVENTS

Motorcycle Live
Sat - Thu from 9am
The NEC Birmingham, B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

The Robin 2 Record & CD Fair
Sun at 11am - 4pm, Free
The Robin 2, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

BBC Good Food Show Winter
Fri, Sat at 9.30am - 6pm,
Sun at 9.30am - 5pm,
£21.75 - £94
The NEC, Birmingham, B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

Ballet's Christmas cracker returns

BIRMINGHAM Royal Ballet have brought their annual Christmas treat, *The Nutcracker*, to Birmingham Hippodrome.

The sumptuous fantasy danced to the music of Tchaikovsky will be staged from tomorrow (Fri) until Sunday, December 13.

In 1990 Sadlers Wells Royal Ballet moved from London the West Midlands to become Birmingham Royal Ballet in what was described as 'the arts coup of the decade'.

In celebration of this momentous occasion Sir Peter Wright assembled a stellar creative team, including designer John F Macfarlane, to create his famous production of *The Nutcracker* for the city of Birmingham.

A quarter of a century later, the classic production which has captured the hearts and imaginations of generations of theatregoers returns to the BRB's home theatre to celebrate its silver anniversary.

In what has now become an annual tradition for many families, Sir Peter's production will have been performed in Birmingham a total of 429 times during its 25 sparkling years.

The spectacular sets and costumes see magical creatures come to life, flurries of snow sweep across the stage and an unforgettable transformation sequence with gigantic Christmas tree, which have helped make this production become widely regarded as one of the best in the world.

The *Nutcracker* tells the tale of young Clara and her Christmas gift of a nutcracker doll, which she receives at a family Christmas party



A magical scene from *The Nutcracker* with Jenna Roberts as the Snow Fairy

from a mysterious magician. When she sneaks downstairs to play with her doll, on the stroke of midnight she is shrunk to the size of her doll, which must defend her against King Rat's army. So is swept up in a fantastical journey to a magical land where she meets the Snow Fairy, the Sugar

Plum Fairy and, of course, her handsome prince.

Tickets range from £19 to £56 and there will be matinees as well as the nightly 7.30pm performances. Contact the Hurst Street theatre via Birminghamhippodrome.com or call 0844 338 5000.

Country life for Outsider Sarah

SHE has picked up numerous awards for her witty humour and frankness on her day to day life, so it is no wonder Sarah Millican has her sell-out crowds crying with laughter.

There was no stopping the Geordie lass in entertaining her audience with her side-splitting antics at her recent gig in Telford, and fans of her no-nonsense approach are in for a treat when she performs at Wolverhampton Civic Hall tomorrow (Fri) and Saturday night.

The TV and radio comedy panel regular is currently touring on her latest show *Sarah Millican: Outsider* which draws upon her recent move to the countryside for some of the biggest laughs.

Her show focused on her family life, tales of her cats: Brody and Ripley, her dog and her new husband. But the comedienne also covers thornier issues, such as body image to bullying. The South Shields comic may also reveal why she was pleased to turn 40 this year.

Sarah has appeared at The Royal Variety Performance and her debut DVD, *Chatterbox Live*, became the biggest selling stand-up DVD by a female comedian. She has released three more since. She has notched up appearances on top TV shows including *QI*, *Mock the Week*, *Have I Got News For You*, *8 Out of 10 Cats*, *Live at the Apollo*, *Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow*, and has chatted to Graham Norton, Jonathan Ross and Alan Carr on their respective chat shows.

Sarah's skills are in constantly keeping her audience on their toes with her constant down to earth comedy.



Tar very much for these rock veterans

KEY gigs over the next few days include wry Australian indie rocker Courtney Barnett at the Wulfrun Hall tomorrow (Fri), 80s synth popsters China Crisis at the Robin 2 in Bilston on Sunday and folk-rockers The Waterboys at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, on Monday.

Punk rock stalwarts in The Jack Tars at Robin 2 on Wednesday include Captain Sensible, Mike Peters and Slim Jim Phantom. Rock veteran Joe Brown will be looking back over a career that stretches from the 1950s, and no doubt plucking his ukulele, at Birmingham Town Hall on Saturday, and Josh Groban will sing show tunes at a sold out Symphony Hall on Sunday.

Comedian Dave gets to the point

FANS have two chances to catch stand-up comedian Dave Gorman in the West Midlands on his latest tour, following the success of his Googlewhack and *Modern Life Is Goodish* shows.

This time the comic from Stafford will use the medium of Powerpoint to reveal his ideas.

Dave Gorman Gets Straight to the Point tonight (Thu) at Birmingham's Symphony Hall and again at the Wulfrun Hall in Wolverhampton on Sunday.

Upcoming comedy shows include Sarah Millican (see above), Stewart Francis' Pun Gent Tour at Symphony Hall on December 3, Noel Fielding at the Civic Hall on December 5.

Young Fathers to join the Modfather

THE Modfather himself, Paul Weller, will be in concert at the Barclaycard Arena in Birmingham city centre tomorrow (Fri).

The former Jam man's last single was *I'm Where I Should Be* from his acclaimed 2015 album *Saturn's Pattern*, and it will be followed by *Pick It Up* next month.

Weller will be supported by Scottish trio Young Fathers who won the Mercury Prize for debut album *Dead* last year and this year released second album *White Men Are Black Men Too*.

It's full-on dance-rock at the Barclaycard Arena with Faithless on December 2 and The Prodigy on December 3.

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The Fair is open between 10am - 4pm each day

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 £4 concessions, children aged 12 and younger FREE if accompanied by an adult
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CHOICE



Peter Capaldi

Doctor Who (BBC1, 8.05pm)
The Doctor faces the greatest challenge of his many lives when he is trapped, alone, in a world unlike any he has ever seen. Pursued by a fearsome creature known only as 'the Veil', the Time Lord must attempt the impossible in one final test, and if he makes it through, the long-lost world of Gallifrey is waiting. Peter Capaldi takes centre-stage in what is effectively a one-man episode for the first half of this year's series finale.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30 Football Focus.** **12.00 BBC News: Weather.** **12.10 Formula 1:** Abu Dhabi Grand Prix – Qualifying. The battle for pole in the final round of the season (Start-time 1.00pm). **2.05 Tennis:** Davis Cup Final. Belgium v Great Britain. **5.10 Celebrity Mastermind.** (R) **5.40 BBC News.** **5.50 Regional Programme.**
6.00 Pointless Celebrities. David Coulthard, Mark Webber, Allan McNish, Claire Williams, Murray Walker, Nigel Mansell, Christian Horner and Suzi Perry take part in a Formula One-themed edition of the quiz.
6.50 Strictly Come Dancing. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman present as the pro-celebrity dancing contest returns home to the studio following the trip away to Blackpool's Tower Ballroom. While the remaining seven couples might have come back to more familiar surroundings, there's no less glamour on offer, as Len Goodman, Darcey Bussell, Bruno Tonioli and Craig Revel Horwood appraise their performances in Ballroom and Latin routines. The stars are also given a chance to improve their initial scores in a Quickstepathon. Once all the competitors have had a second chance to dance, the viewing public will decide which two pairs will face each other in tomorrow's dance-off, which as ever will see one unlucky duo leave the contest.
8.05 Doctor Who. The Doctor is stranded alone on a strange world, and must face a creature known only as 'the Veil' as his quest to return to Gallifrey grows closer to a conclusion than ever before.
9.00 Casualty. Cal contests the outcome of Matilda's paternity test, and makes a shocking discovery about his own history in the process. Meanwhile, Jacob proves he is now in control of his anger.
9.50 The National Lottery Live. Special guest Jason Donovan performs live.
10.00 BBC News: Weather.
10.20 Match of the Day. Highlights of Manchester City v Southampton and Leicester City v Manchester United; National Lottery Update.
11.40 The Apprentice. (R)
12.40 Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.45 BBC News.**

BBC2

6.10 Race to Super Bowl 50. **6.55 Film:** Tennessee's Partner. (1955) **8.20 Formula 1:** Abu Dhabi Grand Prix – Practice Two. **9.55 Formula 1:** Abu Dhabi Grand Prix – Practice Three. **11.05 F1 Rewind – Amazing Races.** **12.05 Terry and Mason's Great Food Trip.** (R) **12.35 Terry and Mason's Great Food Trip.** (R) **1.05 Live Snooker:** UK Championship. The second round gets under way at the Barbican Centre in York. **4.30 Final Score.** **5.10 Flog It!** **5.40 The Great Pottery Throw Down.** (R)
6.40 Great Continental Railway Journeys. Michael Portillo traces the early 20th-century roots of the Spanish Civil War, which divided his family and sent his father into exile. The former politician discovers a nation fractured at the time by social tensions and regional loyalties, which today offer a rich diversity of cultures to delight the tourist. After arriving in Majorca from Barcelona, Michael spoils himself enjoying spectacular scenic views aboard a 1912 vintage railway and a 1913 tram. Last in the series. (R)
7.40 Japan: Earth's Enchanted Islands. Michelle Dockery narrates a documentary examining the wildlife of the east Asian country, beginning with the animals that live on the island of Honshu. (R)
8.40 Dad's Army. Walker is caught smuggling Italian POWs out of camp at night, but far from being a traitor, he is furthering the war effort – and making some money on the side. (R)
9.10 QI XL. Bill Bailey, Jo Brand and Greg Davies join regular panellist Alan Davies and host Stephen Fry to meander through miscellaneous marriage and mating matters.
9.55 Film: Papadopoulos & Sons. (2012) Premiere. A Greek millionaire loses everything he has in a financial crisis, leaving him with only one asset – his share in the fish and chip shop his father used to run. He is forced to return to his roots and work with his laidback brother to revive the family business. Comedy, starring Stephen Dillane.
11.40 Snooker: UK Championship. Action from the second round at the Barbican Centre in York.
12.30 Snooker: UK Championship Extra. **2.30 This Is BBC Two.** **5.45 The A to Z of TV Gardening.** (R)

ITV

6.00 CITY: Bottom Knockout Street. **6.10 Bottom Knockout Street.** (R) **6.25 Bottom Knockout Street.** (R) **6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures.** (R) **6.50 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures.** (R) **7.00 Signed Stories: Share a Story.** (R) **7.05 Oddbods.** (R) **7.10 Sooty.** (R) **7.25 Super 4.** (R) **7.40 Adventure Time.** **8.00 Marvel Avengers Assemble.** **8.30 Thunderbirds Are Go.** **9.00 Jessie.** **9.25 ITV News.** **9.30 Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **10.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **11.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **12.30 ITV News: Weather.** **12.40 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **1.45 Judge Rinder.** (R) **2.45 Doc Martin.** (R) **3.45 Midsomer Murders.** (R) **5.45 Regional Programme: Weather.**
6.00 ITV News: Weather.
6.15 Catchphrase. Stephen Mulhern hosts the game show in which three contestants guess the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues, before one of them plays to win £50,000.
7.00 The Chase: Celebrity Special. Actress Sally Phillips, musician Rick Wakeman, professional snowboarder Jenny Jones and impressionist Alistair McGowan pit their wits against ruthless quiz genius the Chaser, as Bradley Walsh hosts another star-studded edition of the show.
8.00 The X Factor. This year's live show phase continues, as the remaining would-be stars face the fifth round of pulse-quickening performances. As ever, Simon Cowell, Nick Grimshaw, Rita Ora and Cheryl Fernandez-Versini are on hand to appraise the competitor's talents, and presenters Caroline Flack and Olly Murs offer the singers much-needed moral support on-stage. As always, tomorrow's show will see yet another act eliminated following another tense sing-off.
9.45 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! Ant and Dec present the celebrity challenge, as the famous faces continue their ordeal in the Australian jungle.
10.45 The Jonathan Ross Show. Luther star Idina Menzel joins Jonathan in the studio, along with Celebrity Juice host Keith Lemon. Hollywood actress Liv Ullmann and wildlife documentarian David Attenborough.
11.50 ITV News: Weather. **12.05 Jackpot247.** **3.00 Show Me the Telly.** (R) **3.50 ITV Nightscreen.**

CHANNEL 4

6.15 The King of Queens. (R) **6.40 The King of Queens.** (R) **7.05 Race of Champions 2015.** **8.00 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **8.30 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **9.00 The Morning Line.** **10.00 Frasier.** (R) **10.30 Frasier.** (R) **11.00 The Big Bang Theory.** **11.30 The Big Bang Theory.** **11.55 The Simpsons.** (R) **12.30 The Simpsons.** (R) **1.00 Channel 4 Racing.** Live coverage from Newbury and Newcastle. **4.00 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **4.30 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **5.00 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **5.30 Come Dine with Me.** (R)
6.00 Come Dine with Me. Speed-dating expert Nikki Yucel hosts the final dinner party in Ipswich, and Kerrie Pankhurst reveals her feelings for another diner before the winner is announced. (R)
6.30 Channel 4 News.
7.00 The World's Weirdest Weather. Examining strange weather events from around the world, including cities buried in snow, plagues of locusts falling from the sky, and changes in temperature that boil lakes and leave frogs frozen solid.
8.00 Grand Designs: House of the Year. Kevin McCloud visits three more houses competing for a place on the finalist shortlist, including a timber and steel clad home in Dungeness, a pink brick house in Belfast, and an 18th century converted mill in rural Scotland. At the end of the show he announces the overall winner of the Royal Institute of British Architects House of the Year 2015, before visiting the house and discovering why it has been crowned the best new home in Britain. Last in the series. (R)
9.00 Film: 2 Guns. (2013) Premiere. Two undercover agents – one working for the DEA the other for the Navy – infiltrate a drug cartel, only for the planned sting operation to go disastrously wrong. Both operatives become fugitives and must work together to survive – but both keep their true identity a secret, mistakenly thinking the other is a real criminal. Action adventure, starring Denzel Washington.
11.10 TFI Friday. Chris Evans hosts the lively entertainment show, featuring Wolf Alice. (R)
12.15 Film: Easy A. (2010) **2.00 Alan Carr: Chatty Man.** (R) **2.55 Fargo.** (R) **3.50 Hollyoaks.** (R) **5.55 Kirstie's Vintage Gems.** (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **8.55 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.** **9.30 The Saturday Show.** **11.40 Film: Annie Claus Is Coming to Town.** (2011) Christmas fantasy, starring Maria Thayer. **1.30 Film: The Christmas Shepherd.** (2014) Drama, starring Teri Polo. **3.20 Film: Finding Mrs Claus.** (2012) Premiere. Comedy, starring Mira Sorvino. **5.10 Film: Christmas in Conway.** (2013) Premiere. Festive romantic drama, starring Andy Garcia.
7.00 5 News Weekend.
7.05 Police Interceptors: Under Attack. Special episode featuring footage of members of the unit coming under attack while trying to keep the bad guys off the streets, from axe-wielding criminals to thugs who are handy with their fists. (R)
8.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. Agents Delroy and Kevin face a web of deceit in an Italian delicatessen in South London as they chase a huge debt amounting to £29,000. Meanwhile, Steve and Paul must evict a tenant in North London who has not paid her rent for over 18 months, before heading to Cambridgeshire to make one of their most emotional evictions to date. Plus, Brian and Delroy track down a pensioner in Surrey who owes £15,000 for a business he bought four years ago. (R)
9.00 Football League Tonight. Kelly Cates and George Riley present extended highlights of the weekend's top matches – the Championship, League One and League Two, including Huddersfield Town v Middlesbrough, Queens Park Rangers v Leeds United, Barnsley v Sheffield United and Plymouth Argyle v Leyton Orient. Plus, a round-up of the main talking points, and interviews with a selection of players and managers.
10.20 TV's 50 Greatest Magic Tricks. A countdown of illusions that have stood the test of time on the small screen, featuring Penn and Teller, Derren Brown, David Blaine, Paul Daniels and Dynamo. (R)
1.05 The Gadget Show. Jon Bentley explores the latest technology for the home. (R) **1.55 SuperCasino.** Live interactive gaming. **3.10 Soap Blatter Exposed: The Fall of Fifi.** (R) **4.00 Gypsies on Benefits & Proud.** (R) **4.50 Make It Big.** **5.45 Angels of Jarm.** (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Great Movie Mistakes V: Revenge of the Fifth **7.15 Don't Tell the Bride** **8.15 Top Gear India Special** **9.45 Live at the Apollo** **10.30 Russell Howard's Good News** **11.00 Family Guy** **1.15 Josh** **1.45 Rent a Cop** **2.15 The Fear** **2.45 Live at the Apollo** **3.30 Russell Howard's Good News** **4.00 Close**
BBC Four
7.00 Empire of the Seas: How the Navy Forged the Modern World **8.00 Britain's Outlaws: Highwaymen, Pirates and Rogues** **9.00 The Bridge** **11.00 Catching History's Criminals: The Forensics Story** **12.00 Burt Bacharach: A Life in Song** **1.30 Top of the Pops: 1980** **2.05 Easy Listening Hits at the BBC** **3.05 Sounds of the 70s** **3.35 Close**
ITV2
12.00 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **1.30 The Xtra Factor** **2.30 Little Mix: The Hot Desk** **2.45 Scorpion** **3.40 You've Been Framed!** **4.10 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!** **5.40 Film: Hulk** (2003) **8.25 Film: Back to the Future** (1985) **10.45 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here Now!** **11.50 The Keith Lemon Sketch Show** **12.50 Plebs** **1.45 Viral Tap** **2.25 Animal Practice** **2.45 Teleshopping** **5.45 ITV2 Nightscreen**
ITV3
11.35 A Touch of Frost **3.45 Film: Columbo: Identity Crisis** (1975) **5.50 Wycliffe** **6.55 Rosemary & Thyme** **9.00 Colditz** **11.00 Lewis** **1.00 Wycliffe** **1.55 ITV3 Nightscreen** **2.30 Teleshopping**
ITV4
12.45 Live Darts: Players Championship. The opening second-round matches. **5.00 Storage Wars: New York** **6.00 Fifth Gear** **7.00 Live Darts: Players Championship.** The concluding second-round matches. **11.00 Film: Midnight Run** (1988) **1.35 The Big Fish Off** **2.35 Movies Now** **2.45 ITV4 Nightscreen**
E4
11.35 Couples Come Dine with Me **1.35 The Goldbergs** **2.30 Film: Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel** (2009) **4.20 Rise(ish) the Show** **4.30 The Big Bang Theory** **8.00 Film: Shallow Hal** (2001) **10.15 Gogglebox** **12.25 The Inbetweeners** **1.30 The IT Crowd** **2.30 Drifters** **2.55 Rules of Engagement** **4.30 Brooklyn Nine-Nine** **4.55 Revenge**
Film4
11.00 Meet Dave (2008) **1.00 Parolorman** (2012) **2.50 Time Bandits** (1981) **5.05 Condo** (1995) **7.00 Zoolander** (2001) **9.00 The Iceman** (2012) **11.10 American Mary** (2012) **1.15 Dorian Gray** (2009) **3.35 Close**

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CHOICE



Guy Martin: Last Flight of the Vulcan Bomber (Channel 4, 7.30pm)
It may not have the same name recognition of the Spitfire, but the Vulcan plane played a vital role in protecting UK interests during the Cold War era, and was also responsible for the longest raid in British military history when it was used to attack enemy targets in the Falkland Islands. So, it was only fitting that the last airworthy Vulcan bomber, the XH558, was given decent send-off. In the run-up to its final flight, engineer Guy Martin is given unprecedented access to the aircraft, learning more about its history and talking to the crews who faced the awesome responsibility of potentially dropping nuclear bombs. He also gets to fly in formation with the Vulcan.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.35** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **11.00** Fern Britton Meets Shane Lynch. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.10** Formula 1: Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. The final round of the season (Start-time 1.00pm). **3.15** Escape to the Country. **4.15** Songs of Praise. **4.50** The Hunt. (R) **5.50** BBC News.
6.10 Regional Programme.
6.20 Countryfile. John Craven visits a seed bank in Shropshire, where the Woodland Trust is working to preserve Britain's endangered trees. Ellie Harrison meets artist Matt Sewell and learns how he captures the character of birds in his art. Adam Henson investigates a plan to paint cattle to make them more visible to drivers at night, and Tom Heap reports on plans to use insects as feed for farm animals. Including Weather For The Week Ahead.
7.20 Strictly Come Dancing: The Results. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkelman reveal the results of last night's votes, before the two lowest scoring pairs compete in a dance-off. Plus, a musical performance from Adam Lambert.
8.00 Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce presents the second visit in this series to Plas Newydd on the Isle of Anglesey. The team examine rarities including a cabinet with a secret function, a magazine rack made by celebrated designer Piero Fornasetti, a collection of historical items related to deafness, a Chinese silver punchbowl and a photo that has a connection to the Apollo 11 mission.
9.00 The Hunt. Animals on the hunt in deserts and grasslands, where neither predator or prey has anywhere to hide. Featuring footage of cheetahs, eagles, lions, red hot ants and headlight beetles.
10.00 BBC News.
10.20 Regional Programme.
10.30 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman introduces highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Tottenham Hotspur v Chelsea at White Hart Lane and Norwich City v Arsenal at Carrow Road.
11.50 Citizen Khan. Mr Khan opens a fried chicken shop. (R)
12.20 The Graham Norton Show. (R)
1.05 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.10** BBC News.

BBC2

6.30 Big Dreams Small Spaces. (R) **7.30** Countryfile. (R) **8.30** An Island Parish: Falklands. (R) **9.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **10.30** Simply Nigella. (R) **11.00** My Life on a Plate: (R) Weather for the Week Ahead. **11.50** Tennis: Davis Cup Final. **3.15** Football: Women's Euro 2017 Qualifiers. England v Bosnia and Herzegovina (Kick-off 3.30pm). **5.25** Live Snooker: UK Championship.
7.00 Robert Peston Goes Shopping. The history of the retail trade in Britain concludes with a look at how the high street has been hit hard in recent times by the rise in online shopping and the financial crash. From Amazon to Zavvi, and the world's first pop-up mall in east London, Robert shows how the everyday shopping experience has changed and predicts how people will buy their goods in the future. Contributors include Amazon's UK MD Christopher North, ASDS boss Nick Robertson, and Sainsbury's chief Justin King. Last in the series. (R)
8.00 Ireland with Simon Reeve. Part two of two. The second leg of Simon's journey begins at the Giant's Causeway, before visiting a kelp farm on Rathlin Island. He heads to the Dark Hedges in Co Antrim, one of the filming locations from Game of Thrones, and visits Belfast for the July 12 Festivities, discovering how the event has divided the city. He also learns more about Cromwell's influence on Ireland, attends the Gaze film festival, and meets monkeys at an animal sanctuary in the Wicklow mountains.
9.00 The Secret History of the British Garden. The extraordinary changes that occurred in the 19th century, as advances in technology made gardens more lavish, but also more widely available. Monty pays a visit to Queen Victoria's royal retreat at Osborne and Derby's Arboretum, which was the country's first public park. He also investigates the scientific secrets behind the establishment of botanical gardens in Kew and Edinburgh.
10.00 Film: The Cider House Rules. (1999) Drama, starring Tobey Maguire and Michael Caine.
12.00 Snooker: UK Championship.
12.50 Snooker: UK Championship Extra.
2.50 Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **3.45** Holby City. (R) **4.45** This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITY: Bottom Knockout Street. **6.10** Bottom Knockout Street. (R) **6.25** Bottom Knockout Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Sined Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Frasier. (R) **7.10** Sooby. (R) **7.25** Super 4. (R) **7.40** Matt Hatter Chronicles. **8.00** Marvel Avengers Assemble. **8.30** Fish Hooks. **8.45** Fish Hooks. **9.00** Jessie. **9.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.25** ITV News: Weather. **12.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.35** The Chase. (R) **2.35** The X Factor. (R) **4.20** Film: The Mummy Returns. (2001) Fantasy adventure sequel, starring Brendan Fraser.
6.35 Regional Programme: Weather.
6.45 ITV News: Weather.
7.00 Jekyll and Hyde. Robert is tormented by the recent tragedies that have befallen him, causing him to lose control of his transformations. Bulstrode reveals that military intelligence is holding Ravi prisoner, but will release him in return for Robert's help in investigating a series of strange killings. Robert takes on the case, and joins forces a vigilante also on the murderer's trail – but when the truth behind the slaughter emerges, it leads to his new ally becoming a dangerous threat that Bulstrode wants eliminated.
8.00 The X Factor. Caroline Flack and Olly Murs present last night's results, before the two lowest scoring acts compete against each other to decide who will be eliminated from the contest.
9.00 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! Ant and Dec present as the second week of the celebrity challenge draws to a close. The famous faces continue their ordeal in the Australian jungle, struggling to complete the tough daily tasks and dreaded Bustucker Trials, but has anyone emerged as the viewers' favourite and a possible king or queen?
10.30 ITV News: Weather.
10.45 Off Their Rockers. Royston invents the ultimate mobile phone case. (R)
11.15 Premiership Rugby Union. Action from the latest round of fixtures in England's top flight.
12.15 Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Hugh's 3 Good Things: Best Bites. (R) **6.05** The King of Queens. (R) **6.25** The King of Queens. (R) **6.45** Race of Champions 2015. **7.40** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.10** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.55** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.20** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.45** The Simpsons. (R) **2.20** Emergency Animal Hospital. **3.20** Film: Parental Guidance. (2012) Premiere. Comedy, with Billy Crystal and Bette Midler. **5.25** Film: Sister Act. (1992) Comedy, starring Whoopi Goldberg.
7.15 Channel 4 News.
7.30 Guy Martin: Last Flight of the Vulcan Bomber. The mechanic joins a select crew of engineers working to prepare the last Vulcan bomber that is capable of flight for a farewell tour of the UK. The programme features contributions from former crew members, who recall its service in conflicts from the 1950s to the Falklands, as well as serving as Britain's nuclear deterrent.
9.00 Homeland. Carrie realises that she urgently needs Allison's help, while Quinn's plans undergo a significant change. Claire Danes, Miranda Otto, Rupert Friend and Sebastian Koch star.
10.05 Gogglebox. Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV from the comfort of their own sofas. Narrated by Caroline Aherne. (R)
11.10 Film: Bullet to the Head. (2012) A hitman and a police detective join forces to seek revenge on the man who murdered both their partners. Action thriller, with Sylvester Stallone, Sung Kang and Christian Slater.
12.50 Grand Designs Australia. Peter Maddison meets Sarah and Alistair Brodie-Fraser, a couple planning to build an English-style farmhouse in Queensland. **1.45** Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners. Featuring a man who only cleans his kitchen at Easter and Christmas, and a woman whose three-bedroom flat has not been given proper attention in 19 years. (R) **2.40** Four in a Bed. (R) **4.55** Hugh's 3 Good Things: Best Bites. Using food to prepare recipes. (R) **5.10** Deal or No Deal. Players try to beat the banker and guess the contents of mystery boxes, a – if they are brave enough to buy it with what they have won. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **6.20** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.30** Tickety Toc. (R) **6.40** Zack and Quack. (R) **6.55** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.00** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.15** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.25** Little Princess. (R) **7.45** Pip Ahoy! (R) **8.00** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.25** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.40** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **9.00** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.15** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.30** LazyTown. (R) **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.35** Football League Tonight. (R) **12.00** Access. **1.55** Film: The Heart of Christmas. (2006) Romantic comedy drama, starring Jennifer Grey and Clark Gregg. **1.55** Film: The Heart of Christmas. (2011) Premiere. Drama, starring Candace Cameron Bure. **3.35** Film: The Little Mermaid. (1989) Premiere. Animated adventure, with the voice of Jodi Benson. **5.15** Film: Deck the Halls. (2006) Christmas comedy, starring Danny DeVito.
7.05 Police Interceptors: Dog Squad. A look at the police dog teams in the Cleveland and Durham specialist operations unit, observing the highly trained hounds and their handlers in training and in action. (R)
8.05 Impractical Jokers UK. The guys pose as reporters getting public reactions to a fictional story, draw portraits of passers-by, queue jump at the theatre, and try to sell a bizarre flat.
8.30 Impractical Jokers UK. The guys work in a bakery, where they must eat customers' cakes and challenge them to eating contests. The loser then has to pose as an avant garde artist.
8.55 News Weekend.
9.00 Film: Gran Torino. (2008) Misanthropic Korean War veteran Walt leads an isolated existence, and has a tense relationship with his family and nothing but contempt for his neighbours. When a teenager attempts to steal his prized car, he ends up trying to reform the thief, making a connection with the boy's relatives and defending them from a street gang. Drama, directed by and starring Clint Eastwood.
11.25 Film: Justice. (2011) Thriller, with Nicolas Cage and January Jones.
1.15 SuperCasino. **3.10** Ultimate Police Interceptors. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **5.45** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Formula 1: The Abu Dhabi Grand Prix – Highlights. **8.00** Top Gear. **9.00** Russell Howard's Good News. **10.00** Family Guy. **12.20** Josh. **12.50** Rent a Cop. **1.20** Russell Howard's Good News. **1.50** World's Worst Places to Be a Woman? Stacey Dooley investigates. **2.45** Sunny D. **3.00** Footballers. Sex, Money: What's Gone Wrong? **4.00** Close
BBC Four
7.00 Lost Land of the Tiger. **8.00** Horizon: Why Can't We Predict Earthquakes? **9.00** Film: The Deep (2012). **10.30** The Lighthouse Stevensons. **11.30** Looking for Ireland. **12.30** Horizon: Why Can't We Predict Earthquakes? **1.30** Icebound: The Greatest Dog Story Ever Told. **2.30** Lost Land of the Tiger. **3.30** Close
ITV2
1.55 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! 2.55 Catchphrase. **3.40** Film: Happy Feet (2006). **5.50** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **6.50** Film: Back to the Future Part II (1989). **9.00** The Xtra Factor. **10.00** You've Been Framed! **10.30** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! Now! **11.35** Plets. **12.35** Reality Bites. **1.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records. **2.05** Lawson: The Hot Desk. **2.15** Teleshopping. **5.45** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
12.50 Film: Columbo: Identity Crisis (1975). **2.50** Midsomer Murders. **6.55** Sunday Night at the Palladium. **7.55** The Xmas Special. **9.00** The Colditz. **1.00** Film: Closing the Ring (2007). **1.15** Film: 10 Little Indians (1974)
ITV4
12.45 Live Darts: Players Championship. The quarter-finals. **5.00** Storage Wars: Texas. **5.55** River Monsters. **7.00** Live Darts: Players Championship. The semi-finals and final. **11.00** Film: Driven (2001). **1.15** Ray Mears' Close Encounters. **2.20** Nitro Circus
E4
12.30 Film: Astro Boy (2009). **2.20** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts. **2.55** Couples Come Dine with Me. **4.30** The Big Bang Theory. **8.50** The Simpsons Movie (2007). **9.50** The Big Bang Theory. **10.40** The Inbetweeners. **11.50** The IT Crowd. **12.55** Film: Underworld: Awakening (2012). **2.35** Rules of Engagement. **3.20** Holyoaks
Film4
11.40 Porco Rosso (1992). **1.00** Big Business (1998). **3.00** Anastasia (1997). **4.50** The Three Stooges (2012). **6.40** Cuthroat Island (1995). **9.00** Red (2010). **11.15** Me and You (2012). **1.05** The Station Agent (2003). **3.10** Close

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

A Christmas Visitor, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A couple have not celebrated Christmas for 11 years, ever since the death of their son in the first Gulf War. However, their spiritual faith is restored when they are visited by a mysterious stranger who is the same age their boy would have been, had he survived. Drama, starring Reagan Pasternak. (2002)

TUESDAY

Possession, BBC1, 11.50pm

Rival academics get embroiled in the hunt for proof that Victorian poets Randolph Henry Ash and Christabel LaMotte were having an affair – but their rivalry is tempered by a seemingly irresistible attraction between them. Drama from playwright Neil LaBute, starring Gwyneth Paltrow. (2002)

WEDNESDAY

The Road, BBC1, 11.35pm

The world is devastated by a cataclysm that wipes out all the plants and animals and leaves the few remaining humans desperately struggling to survive. A man and his son make an arduous journey across a desolate America inhabited by cannibals, in search of sanctuary further south. Drama based on Cormac McCarthy's novel, starring Viggo Mortensen. (2009)



Mercury Rising, Friday, ITV, 10.40pm

THURSDAY

The Heart of Christmas, Channel 5, 11.30am

A successful businesswoman struggling to make time for her children is moved by the story of a boy who was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Realising he may not live long enough to see another Christmas, his parents decided to celebrate the holiday in October. Drama, starring Candace Cameron Bure. (2011)

FRIDAY

Mercury Rising, ITV, 10.40pm

A top-secret government agency has developed a seemingly unbreakable code – only for an autistic boy to crack it in an instant. Assassins succeed in gunning down his parents, but a maverick FBI agent investigating their deaths finds the child hiding in a closet, and resolves to shield him from the hitmen on his trail. Thriller, starring Bruce Willis, Alec Baldwin and Miko Hughes. (1998)

Series continues to prove wild at heart

Over the past few years, Ben Fogle's New Lives in the Wild series has seen him meet people all over the world who have given up the rat race and started afresh in some of the remotest places on the planet.

However, his new series, which continues on Channel 5 tonight, looks at those a bit closer at home, who have looked to escape the daily grind in search of a happier, and often more self-sufficient, life elsewhere in the British Isles.

It's the same concept, but on a lower budget, if you will.

Of course, upping sticks to live in a remote destination is familiar territory for Fogle, who first found fame in 2000 living on the remote Hebridean island of Taransay for BBC reality series, Castaway.

And in his heart of hearts the presenter still nurtures a dream of turning his back on his fame and fortune to live his own 'wilderness'.

He has even recently pinpointed an uninhabited Scandinavian island where he hopes to set up home.

"Island living is where I began on Taransay, and I have such fond memories of it," he explains.

"I'm only sorry that I don't think television is brave enough to make a series like that [Castaway] again – taking people out of their natural environment for a year.

"I think it's lost its innocence these days – none of us went there to become rich and famous, which seems to be a focus of so much reality TV nowadays. We simply wanted to establish a self-sufficient community."

Nevertheless, when you watch Fogle on TV and look at his prolific CV over the past few years, it appears unlikely that he could spend a year in any one place without getting itchy feet.

And the presenter is back on his travels once again for tonight's latest instalment of New Lives in the Wild UK.

Ben uses his considerable charm and empathy to bond with Simon and Debbie, a former estate agent and lawyer.

At the ages of 48 and 51 respectively, the couple swapped city life for a hidden valley smallholding in the middle of Exmoor National Park. But it's not been easy by any stretch of the imagination.

With more than 100 animals – some kept for companionship, others destined for the table – the couple's life on Exmoor is a constant battle and one they cannot always win, as Ben soon learns.

During his stay, the host discovers how to rear, kill and cook 'extreme free range' pigs, then tries his hand at foraging in steep woodland and attempts to clear an old orchard with a stubborn horse who suffers from hay fever.

As with all the people he has met during the series, Ben has admiration for what the couple are trying to do.

"Over the last few years, there's a fast-growing group of people looking to regress and turn back the clock," he says.

"It's not been easy for any of them and their bravery and resilience is inspiring."



Ben Fogle: New Lives in the Wild UK, Thursday, Channel 5, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Dino Autopsy: T-Rex Channel 5, 9pm

In the past, palaeontologists relied on bones and fossils to build a picture of the Tyrannosaurus Rex. But now in this documentary, they get to take a step forward as cutting-edge special effects, created in collaboration with esteemed experts, are used to create an anatomically complete replica of the prehistoric predator, which scientists can touch, smell – and dissect. To give you a sense of scale, the T-Rex has teeth up to 30cm long, eyes the size of grapefruits and a heart that's 100 times bigger than a human's. However, it also has proportionally tiny arms, and here the experts try to solve the riddle of how the dinosaur managed to use them to feed. They'll also be asking how the creature procreated and whether it was warm or cold-blooded.

TUESDAY

Kirstie's Handmade Christmas Channel 4, 8pm

It's now almost as traditional as egg nog and mince pies for Kirstie Allsopp to present a festive craft-making special. And here, as we enter December, is 2015's version – what's more, it will be shown over three nights, which means we can look forward to heaps of inspiration for our own festive

arrangements. The first edition sees Kirstie journey to Switzerland, a country that embraces Christmas and begins its celebrations in early December. She learns how to make a show-stopping garland, boozy fondue and personalised paper-cut pictures. Upcycling expert Jay Blades demonstrates how to turn a bookcase into a doll's house or castle, while makers and bakers try to impress with their trees, advent calendars and cakes.

Capital BBC1, 9pm

If you can't get enough of the excellent Toby Jones and Rachael Stirling in Detectivists on BBC4, then this compelling drama should leave you more than satisfied. This week, as the 'We Want What You Have' campaign intensifies, the worried residents of Pepys Road demand greater action from the authorities. However, while DI Mill looks for a breakthrough, other forces continue to transform the fortunes of the road's inhabitants. Returning home after her break, Arabella is concerned to find that rather than getting the house in order, Roger has hired the alluring Matya to help with the kids.

WEDNESDAY

This is Tottenham BBC2, 9pm

In 2000, David Lammy became the MP for Tottenham, an area he knew well having grown up close to the Broadwater estate. He witnessed the riots there 30 years ago, and was aware of the problems in the area. During his time in office, other problems have hit Lammy's constituency, including the child abuse scandals of Baby P and Victoria Climbié, the shooting of Mark Duggan, and the 2011 riots. This documentary goes behind-the-scenes at Lammy's advice surgery, where around 6,000 local people call for help every year, offering an insight into the MP's work as he attempts to help a woman find her missing son and a young mother desperately attempting to get her child the life-saving operation he needs.



Kirstie's Handmade Christmas, Tuesday, Channel 4, 8pm

THURSDAY

The Secret Life of 6 Year Olds Channel 4, 8pm

The documentary following three groups of youngsters moves on to the six-year-olds, who have the benefit of two years at school and are beginning to focus much more on their own identities. Kash and Elvin are keen to become group leader, but chaos ensues when the others cannot decide how to choose – by vote or by arm wrestle. Gentle Beatrice struggle to cope with defeat in a tug-of-war, asking her friends if they know the meaning of the word 'competitive', and there is romance in the playground as Elouisa declares her feelings for Kash.

FRIDAY

MOTD Live: FA Cup 2nd Round BBC2, 7.30pm

Salford City v Hartlepool United (Kick-off 7.55pm). Action from the game at Moor Lane. Northern Premier League side Salford – co-owned by five ex-Manchester United stars from the 'Class of '92' – will be looking to cause another upset, having already defeated Hartlepool's League Two rivals Notts County 2-0 in the first round. Striker Danny Webber scored the opening goal in that game, before a sublime strike from Richie Allen wrapped up a famous victory.

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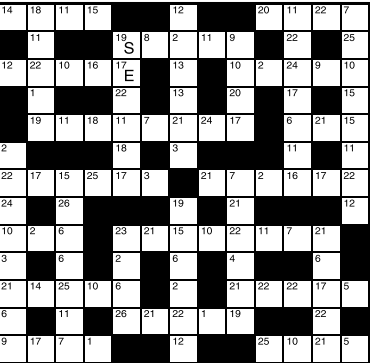
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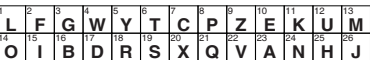
BRAIN GYM No.353

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:



Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

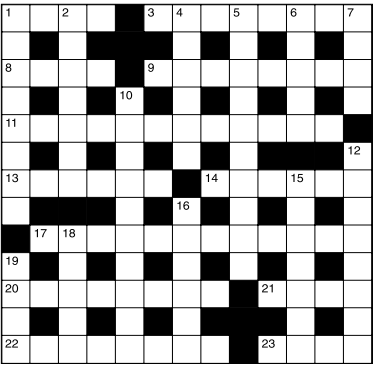
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 1. Cut the end off a weed (4)
- 3. Don't forget about one in society (8)
- 8. Vegetable put on the fire, we hear (4)
- 9 & 19Dn. It gives one a chance to say one's piece (8,4)
- 11. Transport the nursemaid has for a small charge! (4-8)
- 13. Ronald disturbed by contemporary of De Quincey (6)
- 14. Make an effort to give instruction after the start of school (6)
- 17. Ask everybody to be quiet, as commercial travellers do! (4,3,5)
- 20. Idolatry destroyed in a skilful way (8)
- 21. Don't go on southern peak (4)
- 22. The rate fluctuates with certain valued possession (8)
- 23. Describing the desert in "The Sahara Ride" (4)

Down

- 1. Keep down, William, here's an aquatic burrower (8)
- 2. Tempestuous monster! (7)
- 4. Once a dock area from which to send out merchandise (6)
- 5. I came into a dreadful state of malnutrition (10)
- 6. Part of a tribe in Germany in existence (5)
- 7. Carnivals lead to scraps (4)
- 10. Academic bonds - old ones may have some snob value (6,4)
- 12. I printed version that's courageous (8)
- 15. Counter-checker (7)
- 16. Sporting woodsman (6)
- 18. Offer no opposition to some of the meagre emoluments (5)
- 19. See 9 Across



Quick Clues:

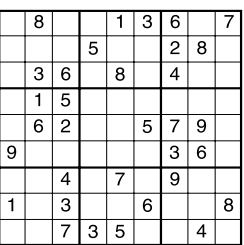
Across

- 1. Yield (4)
- 3. Valuable (8)
- 8. Headland (4)
- 9. Unmarried woman (8)
- 11. Vexation (12)
- 13. Extend (6)
- 14. Famish (6)
- 17. Undeniable (12)
- 20. United (8)
- 21. Inform (4)
- 22. Imperil (8)
- 23. Kind (4)

Down

- 1. Talk (8)
- 2. Hopelessness (7)
- 4. Account (6)
- 5. Establish (10)
- 6. Excel (5)
- 7. Certain (4)
- 10. Ghost (10)
- 12. Waking signal (8)
- 15. Plundering (7)
- 16. Orb (6)
- 18. Wanderer (5)
- 19. Highest degree (4)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >



LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Shift worker; 9 Tonsure; 10 Great; 11 Third; 12 Tutored; 13 Occurs; 15 Taiwan; 18 Coracle; 20 Remus; 22 Place; 23 Chianti; 24 Beastliness. Down: 2 Hindi; 3 Founder; 4 Wreath; 5 Right; 5 Eyebrow; 7 Stethoscope; 8 Studentship; 14 Carnage; 16 Arraign; 17 Pencil; 18 Crews; 21 Minds. QUICK - Across: 1 Nondescript; 9 Elector; 10 Force; 11 Shell; 12 Overeat; 13 Recall; 15 Amount; 18 Meander; 20 Upset; 22 Noise; 23 Allegro; 24 Wealthiness. Down: 2 Obese; 3 Dullful; 4 Sorrow; 5 Rifle; 6 Parvenu; 7 Measurement; 8 Destitution; 14 Chalice; 16 Maudlin; 17 Preach; 19 Dwell; 21 Signs.

Thinking space

Quiz

- 1. What is finocchio?
- 2. What is the capital of Bermuda?
- 3. In financial terms, what do the initials IBRD stand for?
- 4. What did Elias Howe reputedly invent in 1844?
- 5. What is the German name for Gdansk?
- 6. From which language is the word coleslaw derived?
- 7. What is a fumarole?
- 8. Who founded the Bauhaus in Germany in 1919?
- 9. In which year did Chiang Kai-shek die?
- 10. In which North American city is Bay Street the financial centre?

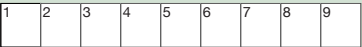
Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Strand Magazine; 2 Mohne and Edersee; 3 Charles Wesley; 4 Hohenzollern; 5 Bronzehead; 6 Glasgow; 7 France; 8 1929; 9 Helios; 10 17th. Niner: ARGUMENTS

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

4589 gives a fibre,
128823 gives a cloth,
76789 gives a stone.



THE RETRO FESTIVAL

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ALTERED IMAGES DR & THE MEDICS BROTHER BEYOND

After 8 years of 80s fun at sell out events around the country, **Let's Rock Birmingham!** comes to Sandwell Valley Country Park on Saturday 11th June 2016. **Let's Rock Birmingham!** offers a huge line-up of artists to bring you the very best of the 80s, and with an action packed day of general 80s madness, there's loads to do for everyone at this Family Friendly Festival.

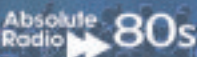
VIP tickets allow access to our funky 80s themed VIP enclosure, where you can kick back and relax in our comfy chill out zone or enjoy the outdoor seating area.

Fancy dress is recommended, but not compulsory!

Gates open 11am
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A substantial detached with scope for extension



THIS substantial detached property is in a highly regarded area in Gillity Avenue, Walsall.

It is for sale through Edwards Moore at £395,000.

With gas-fired central heating and double glazing and ideally placed for commuting, it has a large porch area, a reception hall with stairs off, guest WC, a dining area with a patio door into a conservatory, a spacious lounge with a bay window and a feature fireplace, a good-sized breakfast kitchen with a range of medium oak units, a double electric oven with hob and extractor, part wall tiling, spotlights, a utility area, a further WC, landing with loft ladder to a fully boarded and insulated loft, four bedrooms (two with fitted furniture), a large tiled family bathroom, an extensive block-paved driveway, double garage and a rear garden. Contact Edwards Moore on 01922 615222 or visit www.edwardsmoore.co.uk



Lovely terraced is ideal as first home

A LOVELY two-bedroomed terraced home in West Street, Leamore, Walsall, with very appealing accommodation, is the perfect first-time buy.

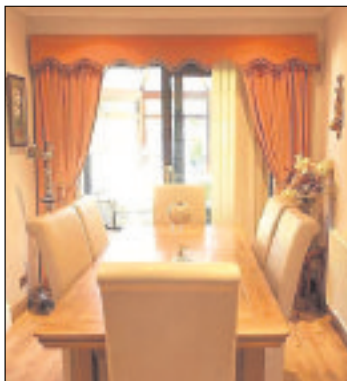
Including a gorgeous refitted kitchen, the traditional property is for sale through Skitts at £84,950.

It has a front reception room with a chimney breast and double doors to a rear reception room with a chimney breast, under-stairs cupboard and stairs off, a kitchen with built-in electric fan-assisted oven, inset four-ring gas hob with extractor hood over and French doors to the garden.

There is also a bathroom, two bedrooms and a loft room.

The rear garden has a patio and lawn.

For further information contact Skitts on 01922 478104 or visit www.skitts.net



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LOT 1 **Chepstow Road** **Walsall**

Viewings: Thursday 26th Nov 11.00am



End of terrace property in need of complete modernisation and improvement making an ideal purchase for builder or investor. Situated in a popular residential area within easy access of Bloxwich Town Centre the property has pleasing front aspect and comprises:- Fully Enclosed Porch, Lounge, Kitchen, Utility Area, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Fore and Rear Garden.

●Guide Price £45,000 - £55,000

LOT 2 **Ryle Street** **Walsall**

Viewings: Thursday 26th Nov 11.30am



Traditionally styled three bedroom semi detached property situated in a popular residential area just off Field Road, ideally suited to an investor or builder. Bloxwich town centre is close by with all amenities. Set back from the road behind a small fore garden the property comprises:- Reception Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Store Cupboard, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Fore and Rear Gardens.

●Guide Price £40,000 - £50,000

LOT 3 **Jordan Court, Load Street** **Bewdley**

Viewings: Wed 25th Nov 1:30pm



Located in the centre of Bewdley, this 2nd floor apartment which is ideal for first time purchasers of buy to let investors benefits from electric storage heating and comprises:- Accommodation: Communal Entrance, Reception Hall, Open Plan Living Area, Kitchen Area, Two Bedrooms and Bathroom. Buyers Premium: A Buyers Premium of £900.00 (inclusive of V.A.T) will be charged.

●Guide Price £60,000 PLUS

LOT 4 **Hall Lane** **Coseley**

Viewings: Sat 28th Nov 12.30 pm



The former Horse and Jockey Inn dating back to the 1850's, full of character now arranged as a generous three/four bedroom cottage positioned by way of a service road off Hall Lane and in walking distance to the local amenities of Hurst Hill. Sitting on a generous size plot and also having a detached garage, off-road parking, a further detached building to rear suitable for storage/workshop/annex area, and extensive gardens. Internal accommodation is in need of modernisation but offers tremendous potential for a buyer to carry out works to their own design and taste or even to convert to two self contained flats for investment purposes (subject to planning).

●Guide Price £150,000 PLUS

LOT 5 **Former Electrical Sub Station, Belchers Lane** **Birmingham, B9 5RY**

By appointment through Auctioneers



This two storey brick built former sub station building offers itself to a variety of uses (not residential) subject to the necessary planning and building regulation approval. Situated not far from the corner of Belchers Lane and Caldwell Road, the property offers over 2000 square feet of storage area arranged over two floors. Set back from the road there is a small parking area. Buyers Premium: A Buyers Premium of £900.00 (inclusive of V.A.T) will be charged.

● Guide Price £10,000 - £20,000

LOT 6 **Lichfield Street** **Walsall**

By appointment through Auctioneers



This commercial property with three floors of office space is situated a short walk from Walsall town centre. This property has been very well maintained, with all amenities close at hand the property comprises: Ground Floor: Front door leads to entrance hallway, to the left is the front reception room, with access to cellar. Second reception room with under stair cupboard and door leading to Downstairs W.C. and Side access door with leads to side alley. Third Reception Room with access to Downstairs W.C. Rear Reception with two windows to rear and access door to side alley. First Floor: Stairs lead to landing with access to First Floor W.C., door leading to Kitchen and a second first floor W.C. Another door leading to Hallway with access to First Floor

●Guide Price £120,000 PLUS

LOT 7 **Alvechurch Road** **Northfield**

By appointment through Auctioneers



Traditionally styled extended semi detached property in need of modernisation and improvement. Set back from the road on a service road, the property is situated in a popular residential area with all amenities close at hand and offers tremendous scope for improvement. With a small fore garden, the property comprises: Ground Floor Reception Hall with stairs to first floor off, Dining Room, Lounge, Extended Kitchen First Floor: Bedroom One, Bedroom Two, Bedroom Three, Bathroom Outside: Fore and Rear Gardens

●Guide Price £100,000 PLUS

LOT 8 **Church Close, Old Hall Lane** **Fradley**

Viewings: The site is open for viewing



This Freehold building plot has Planning Permission (subject to conditions) Application Number 14/00470/FUL Lichfield District Council (Lichfielddc.gov.uk) for the erection of a four bedroom detached dwelling. The plot is situated in the popular village of Fradley, just off the A38 and has views to the village church to the front. Surrounding properties are of a substantial nature and the plot offers an ideal opportunity for a developer or individual with the aspirations of a self build in a delightful spot.

●Guide Price £165,000 PLUS

LOT 10 **Former electric sub station building, Bakers Lane Aldridge,**

Viewings: 25th Nov 11am



Former electric sub station building of brick with tiled roof. This rare opportunity presents itself with options for conversion to commercial use or demolition to create car parking facility. In the heart of Aldridge Village (Subject to Planning) Buyers Premium: A Buyers Premium of £900.00 (inclusive of V.A.T) will be charged.

●Guide Price £10,000 - £20,000

LOT 10a **Claremont Place, Brookfield Road** **Birmingham**

By appointment through auctioneers



Traditionally styled end of terrace property with part double glazing and central heating, situated in a popular residential area close to Birmingham City Centre and would make an ideal purchase for an investor. Set back behind a lawed fore garden, the property comprises:- Ground Floor Lounge with double glazed window to front, inner lobby with access to Kitchen/Diner with range of base and wall units and central heating boiler. First Floor Bedroom One (front), Bedroom Two (rear), Bathroom with matching suite. Outside: Fore and Rear Gardens

●Guide Price £70,000 Plus

LOT 11 **Oakland Road** **Walsall**

Viewings: Thursday 26th Nov 12.00



In need of complete modernisation and improvement this traditionally styled semi detached property is conveniently located close to all amenities and would make an ideal purchase for investor or builder. Set back from the road behind a fore garden, the property comprises:-

Lounge, Kitchen, Bathroom, Three Bedrooms, Fore and Rear Garden.

●Guide Price £35,000 - £45,000

LOT 12 **Walker Road** **Walsall**

Viewings: Thursday 26th November 12:30



This traditionally styled gas centrally heated and double glazed semi detached property would make an ideal purchase for an investor. Set back from the road behind a good sized garden and driveway affording off street parking, the property is conveniently located for all amenities and requires a small amount of upgrade. Ground Floor Enclosed Porch, Reception Hall, Lounge, Kitchen with range of units, wall mounted Baxi central heating boiler, Lobby with access to w.c. and door to side Verandah First Floor Staircase leads to landing providing access to Bedroom One (front), Bedroom Two (rear), Bathroom with white suite, panelled bath, pedestal wash hand basin, low level w.c. Outside: Fore Garden with off street parking, Rear Garden.

●Guide Price £65,000 PLUS

LOT 13 **Greystoke Avenue** **Hodge Hill**

Viewings: Wed 25th Nov 2:30pm,



Situated in a quiet cul-de-sac in the popular Hodge Hill area of Birmingham with all amenities close at hand and easy access to the motorway network, this traditionally styled semi detached property is in need of slight improvement but offers an ideal opportunity for homeowner or investor. Ground Floor: Enclosed Porch, Reception Hall with cupboard, Open Plan Lounge/Dining Room Lounge with bay window to front, Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen with door to garage. First Floor: Landing providing access to Bedroom One (rear), Bedroom Two (front), Bedroom Three (front), Bathroom with corner bath, shower and wash hand basin, Separate W.C. Outside: Driveway with off street parking leads to Garage, Enclosed Rear Garden (in need of attention) with school paying fields beyond. Buyers Premium A Buyers Premium of £900.00 (inclusive of V.A.T) will be charged.

●Guide Price £115,000 - £125,000

LOT 14 **Wood Lane** **Pelsall**

Viewings: Thursday 26th November 1pm



This well maintained, traditional, semi-detached property occupying a generous plot in this popular residential location benefits from gas central heating and uPVC double glazing. With all amenities close at hand the property comprises: Ground Floor: Porch, Reception Hall, Attractive Lounge which has uPVC double glazed square bay window to the front, double radiator, feature fireplace with marble surround and hearth housing living flame gas fire, television aerial point and coving to ceiling. Separate Dining Room with uPVC double glazed patio doors out to the rear, feature fireplace with living flame effect electric fire and coving to the ceiling. Fitted Kitchen has uPVC double glazed picture window to the side and useful under stair storage cupboard, and Utility. First Floor: Master Bedroom which has uPVC double glazed picture window to the front. Bedroom Two with uPVC double glazed picture window to the rear and radiator. Bedroom Three with uPVC double glazed picture window to the front; as well as the Bathroom.

●Guide Price £110,000 PLUS

LOT 15 **Sandringham Road,** **Perry Barr**

Friday 27th November 2.30pm



This well maintained three bedroom semi detached property is situated in a popular residential area within Perry Barr. With gas central heating and double glazing already fitted this property would make an ideal purchase for a home owner. Ground Floor Recessed Porch, Reception Hall, Living Room, Refitted Kitchen, Side Verandah. First Floor Bedroom One, Bedroom Two, Bedroom Three and Bathroom. Outside: There is a block paved fore garden. To the rear there is a good sized garden which is private and enclosed, it also includes a decked area.

●Guide Price £110,000 Plus

●Guides are provided as an indication of each seller's minimum expectation. They are not necessarily figures which a property will sell for and may change at any time prior to the auction. Each property will be offered subject to a Reserve (a figure below which the Auctioneer cannot sell the property during the auction) which we expect will be set within the Guide Range or no more than 10% above a single figure Guide



HOMES AND FINANCIAL

66 Pool Hayes Lane, Willenhall, WV12 4PY



- Three Bedrooms
- Lounge
- Dining Room
- Large Fitted Kitchen
- Family Bathroom
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- Enclosed Rear Garden
- Driveway

Detached House

£155,000

20 Bolton Road, Wednesfield, WV11 1UA



- Three Bedrooms
- Front Room
- Living Room
- Fitted Kitchen
- Family Bathroom
- First Floor W.C.
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- Rear Garden

Mid-Terraced House

£550PCM

11 Rough Hay Road, Darlaston, WS10 8NH



- Three Bedrooms
- Lounge
- Dining Room
- Fitted Kitchen
- Bathroom (ground floor)
- W.C. / Shower Room (first floor)
- Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating
- Enclosed Rear Garden

Mid - Terraced House

£495PCM

358 Wolverhampton Road, Walsall, WS2 8RJ



- Three Bedrooms
- Lounge
- Kitchen/Breakfast Bar
- Bathroom
- Double Glazing
- Gas Central Heating
- Enclosed Rear Garden

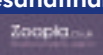
Mid-Terraced House

£475PCM

Tel: 01922 611800

Joginder House 18a Lichfield Street Walsall WS1 1TJ

www.mghomesandfinancial.co.uk



PROPERTY

Good-sized detached has been well-maintained



THIS four-bedroom detached in Gorway Close, Walsall, is just a short distance from the town centre.

It is for sale through Edwards Moore at £295,000.

With gas central heating and double glazing, it has a reception hall, a guest WC, a through lounge/dining room, sitting room, conservatory, a newly-fitted attractive kitchen, four good-sized bedrooms, a family bathroom, well-maintained front and enclosed private rear garden and a large garage. For further information contact Edwards Moore on 01922 615222 or visit www.edwardsmoore.co.uk



Monday 30th November 2015

7pm Prompt at

THE PREMIER SUITE, BAR SPORT

1st Floor The Danilo, High Green,

Cannock



LOT 1

30 ROWLEY CLOSE, HEDNESFORD, WS12 4ES

FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Semi detached house
- ◆ Requiring refurbishment
- ◆ Predominantly double glazed
- ◆ Garage
- ◆ Gas fired central heating (Not Tested)
- ◆ EPC rating D (61)

GUIDE PRICE £30,000+



LOT 2

11 HEDNESFORD ROAD, BROWNHILLS, WS8 7LS

FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Semi detached house
- ◆ Built C.1901 of brick and tile construction
- ◆ Requiring extensive modernisation and refurbishment
- ◆ Predominantly double glazed
- ◆ Gas fired central heating
- ◆ EPC rating F (33)

GUIDE PRICE £70,000



LOT 3

26A NEW ROAD, ARMITAGE, RUGELEY, WS15 4BN

LEASEHOLD INVESTMENT

- ◆ First floor flat
- ◆ In popular residential area
- ◆ Currently let on an assured shorthold tenancy (Holding over)
- ◆ Currently producing £4,420 P.A
- ◆ EPC rating G (4)

GUIDE PRICE £35,000+



LOT 4

56 HEATH GAP ROAD, BLACKFORDS, CANNOCK, WS11 6DS

FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Semi detached house
- ◆ Requiring refurbishment
- ◆ Predominantly double glazed
- ◆ Gas fired central heating (Not Tested)
- ◆ EPC rating E (47)

GUIDE PRICE £48,000+



LOT 5

44 CANNOCK ROAD, CANNOCK, WS11 5BX

FREEHOLD SUBJECT TO REGULATED WEEKLY TENANCY

- ◆ Currently producing £3,588 P.A.
- ◆ Traditional semi detached house
- ◆ Brick and tile construction
- ◆ Three bedrooms
- ◆ EPC rating G (1)

GUIDE PRICE £30,000+



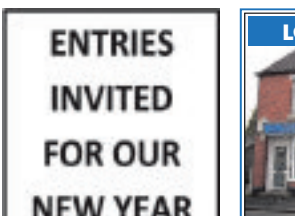
LOT 6

308 HEDNESFORD ROAD, HEATH HAYES, WS12 3DS

FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Mid terraced house
- ◆ Two bedrooms
- ◆ Gas central heating
- ◆ Part double glazed
- ◆ In need of repair/improvement
- ◆ EPC rating E (54)

GUIDE PRICE £60,000 - £60,000



LOT 7

72 PRINCESS STREET, BURNWOOD, WS1 1JN

FREEHOLD SUBJECT TO REGULATED TENANCY

- ◆ Semi detached house
- ◆ Three bedrooms
- ◆ Gas central heating
- ◆ Rear gardens with garage
- ◆ Currently producing £2,600 P.A (inclusive of water rates)
- ◆ EPC rating E (46)

GUIDE PRICE £50,000+



LOT 8

3 MYRTLE GROVE, BREWOOD, ST19 9HN

FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Semi detached bungalow
- ◆ In need of comprehensive renovation
- ◆ Two bedrooms
- ◆ Gas fired central heating
- ◆ Fully double glazed
- ◆ EPC rating D (55)

Guide Price £140,000 - £160,000

ENTRIES INVITED FOR OUR NEW YEAR AUCTION

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Walsall
01922 460781

Bilston
01902 505974

Lakeside Close
Willenhall

Modern 3 bedroom detached house with en-suite to main, 2 reception rooms, downstairs w.c, kitchen, main bathroom, garage and driveway, double glazing and central heating, front and rear gardens, with no upward chain, call Paul Dubberley to view.

OFFERS AROUND: £180,000

Moseley Road
Bilston

LOVELY Traditional 3 bedroom detached house, entrance porch and hallway, dining room, lounge/diner, kitchen, bathroom, driveway and garage, front and rear gardens, central heating and double glazing (where specified) call Paul Dubberley to view. EPC - D

OFFERS AROUND: £170,000

Clarkes Lane
Willenhall

COMING SOON PLEASE CALL TO BOOK A VIEWING
Refurbished 3 bedroom semi detached house

OFFERS AROUND: £159,950

Great Bridge Road
Bilston

BRAND NEW HOME
:BR>
INTRODUCING GRITTLETON

OFFERS AROUND: £159,950

Great Bridge Road
Bilston

BRAND NEW HOME
:BR>
INTRODUCING GRITTLETON

OFFERS AROUND: £159,950

Upper Ettingshall Road
Bilston

3 Bedroom Detached Residence with No Upward Chain. Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating, briefly comprises: Reception Hall, Guest W.C, Lounge, Dining Area, Conservatory, Kitchen, Utility Room, 3 Bedrooms, Bathroom with separate shower cubicle, Front Driveway, Rear Garden & Garage.

OFFERS AROUND: £155,000

Hallgreen Street
Bilston

Investment Opportunity :br>

This Spacious second floor flat offers a potential yield of around 11%. The property which is Gas central heated and UPVC double glazed throughout briefly comprises: Hallway, Lounge / Dining Room, Kitchen, Three bedrooms, Bathroom. No Upward Chain.

OFFERS AROUND: £55,000

Merstone Close
Bilston

A One bedroom ground floor flat briefly comprising entrance hall, lounge, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom. No upward chain.

OFFERS AROUND: £60,000

Ambleside Close
Bilston

1 Bedroom Mid Terraced Back to Back House. Good Condition and Ready to Move Straight In. Lounge, Kitchen/ Diner, Bathroom, Parking. No Upward Chain, Call Paul Dubberley to View. EPC - E

OFFERS AROUND: £69,950

Compton Road
Wolverhampton

An immaculately presented 1 bedroom apartment ideally located on the fringes of Wolverhampton City Centre location.

Regency Meves is well situated near to the wide variety of local facilities that are available within easy walking distance at Crystal Ash, security gated parking and entrance, lounge open plan to kitchen, bedroom,

OFFERS AROUND: £70,000

Leveson Street
Willenhall

Spacious Well Presented Middle Terrace property in a popular location. With No Upward Chain, Gas Central Heating & Double Glazing briefly comprising: Reception Hall, Two Reception Rooms, Good Size Kitchen with Utility Area, Two Double Bedrooms, Bathroom & Rear Garden.

OFFERS AROUND: £75,000

Thinking of selling your property in the New Year but don't want to be disturbed over Christmas?

We may have the perfect solution for you...

If you are thinking of selling a property in the new year, now is the time to get started to take advantage of these selling secrets:

- There is a huge increase in online property searches between Christmas and the New Year as buyers are sat at home with time on their hands.
- Allows us time to sift through enquiries and present you with only the most suitable applicants for your property.
- Immediate viewings once you're ready in the New Year.
- Gives your property a head start against people who market their property in the New Year.
- Buyers looking over the winter are usually very genuine. Having your property ready to sell, fresh and newly listed in the new year will give you an advantage over other sellers.

Let us visit your home and prepare your property for sale now. We will advertise your property online over the busy Christmas period to maximise the spike in search activity, however we promise not to disturb you until our doors re-open in the new year, leaving you to relax and enjoy Christmas undisturbed.

Call your local Paul Dubberley branch now to arrange a free, no obligation market appraisal

Ashley Street
Bilston

A Two bedroom mid terraced house situated just off Mount Pleasant benefits from being located a short walk away from the Bilston Town centre briefly comprises, lounge, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, two bedrooms, gas central heating, double glazing and rear garden.

OFFERS AROUND: £82,950

Ashtree Grove
Bilston

A traditional semi detached family home which is located in a popular position. The spacious accommodation comprises lounge, dining room, kitchen with side verandah, three bedrooms, modern bathroom and rear garden. The property also benefits from gas central heating and double glazing.

OFFERS AROUND: £100,000

Hartland Avenue
Bilston

Well Presented Modern End of Terrace close to all local amenities and transport links. Benefiting from UPVC Double Glazing and Gas Central Heating and briefly comprising: Reception Hall, Lounge, Breakfast Kitchen, two Bedrooms, Bathroom with shower, Front Driveway providing off road parking for two cars and Rear Garden.

OFFERS AROUND: £100,000

Chatsworth Close
Willenhall

:br> CONVENIENTLY LOCATED AND EXTENDED THREE / FOUR BEDROOM SEMI DETACHED FAMILY HOME!!!!

HALL, LOUNGE, DINING ROOM, FITTED KITCHEN, CONSERVATORY,

OFFERS AROUND: £119,950

Portway Road
Bilston

3 Bedroom semi detached house with no upward chain, entrance hall, lounge/diner, modern kitchen, modern bathroom, double glazing and central heating, driveway, front and rear gardens, call Paul Dubberley to view.

OFFERS AROUND: £120,000

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ARE YOU THINKING OF SELLING YOUR PROPERTY TO HAVE A

NEW HOME IN THE NEW YEAR?



WHY NOT ACT NOW?



We all know that Christmas is a special time to spend with friends and family and you are not usually thinking about selling your home. However, over 25 years experience has shown us that in the New Year anyone who was thinking about moving house is desperate to get their property on the market and sold.

Why not get ahead of the competition and instruct your local award winning estate agent to sell your property. Get a free valuation and call us before 12th December and receive £500* of our fee. You can sit back, relax and take advantage of the increased web traffic over the busy Christmas period. This will maximise exposure of your property meaning you are in a fantastic position to sell and move in the New Year. You don't need to take viewings or move house...just be ready!



**BOOK YOUR FREE VALUATION BEFORE THE
12TH DEC AND GET £500* OFF YOUR FEES.**

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Walsall Road, Walsall Wood

- Superbly Designed Detached Bungalow
- Set on 0.8 Acre Plot
- Three Bedrooms all having En-Suites
- Grand Entrance Hallway
- Lounge with Inglenook Fireplace
- Fitted Kitchen
- Sun Room with Log Burner
- Conservatory



Offers in the Region Of £450,000



New Street, Shelfield

- Three Bedroom Detached House
- Two Bedroom Self Contained Annexe
- Detached Double Garage
- Ample Off Road Parking
- Rear Garden
- Gas Central Heating

£280,000



Sneyd Lane, Essington

- Ample Parking to the Fore
- Welcoming Entrance Hallway
- 38ft Living Area
- Open Plan Kitchen/Diner
- Conservatory
- Utility Room
- Potential to convert space to a Granny Annexe
- Garage
- Superb Established Rear Garden

Guide Price £389,950



Curlew Drive, Brownhills

- No Upward Chain
- Impressive David Wilson Home
- Sought After Development
- Bespoke Fitted Kitchen
- Superb Conservatory
- Detached Double Garage
- Sweeping Drive for Several Cars
- Anthracite Grey Double Glazing Units



£379,950



Bransdale Road, Clayhanger

- IMPOSING DETACHED THREE-STOREY
- FIVE BEDROOMS
- IMPRESSIVE MASTER SUITE
- SUPERB KITCHEN/DINER
- DELIGHTFUL REAR GARDEN
- SOUGHT AFTER LOCATION
- Viewing Essential
- Great School Catchment




£275,000



Castle Road, Walsall Wood

- Under Floor Heating to Ground Floor
- Aluminium Bi-fold Doors to Rear
- Composite Front Door
- 'A' Rated uPVC Windows
- Oak Internal Doors
- Landscaped Rear Garden

£259,950



Sneyd Lane, Essington

- Ample Parking to the Fore
- Welcoming Entrance Hallway
- 38ft Living Area
- Open Plan Kitchen/Diner
- Conservatory
- Utility Room
- Potential to convert space to a Granny Annexe
- Garage
- Superb Established Rear Garden

Guide Price £389,950



Valleyside, Pelsall

- No Onward Chain
- Delightful Detached Family Home
- Sought After Location
- Four Bedrooms
- En-Suite to Master
- Conservatory
- Fitted Kitchen
- Utility room
- Viewing Essential



Nutmeg Grove, Walsall

- Superbly Extended Detached Home
- Impressive Extended Kitchen
- Secure Parking to the Rear
- Garage & Off Road Parking to the Front
- Five Generous Bedrooms
- En-Suite to Master Bedroom
- Sought After Development
- Chain Free



Offers in the Region Of £269,950




Daw End Lane, Rushall

- No Upward Chain
- Potential to Convert Garage to an Annexe
- Driveway for Several Vehicles
- Through Lounge
- Ground Floor Shower Room
- Four Bedrooms
- Refitted Bathroom
- Aldridge Secondary School & Queen



£240,000



Victoria Terrace, Walsall

- Victorian Grade II Listed Building
- Three Generous Bedrooms
- Stunning Views over Arboretum Lake
- Front Gardens
- Parking Area
- Original Period Features Throughout

Offers in the Region Of £220,000



Valleyside, Pelsall

- No Onward Chain
- Delightful Detached Family Home
- Sought After Location
- Four Bedrooms
- En-Suite to Master
- Conservatory
- Fitted Kitchen
- Utility room
- Viewing Essential



Lichfield Road, Shire Oak

- Detached Family Home
- Close to Shire Oak Academy
- Excellent Transport Links to Local Towns
- Extension Potential
- Superb Front & Rear Gardens
- Side Garage
- Off Road Parking
- Ground Floor WC



Offers in the Region Of £230,000



Norton Road, Pelsall

- Superbly Appointed Link Detached Bungalow
- Three Bedrooms
- Kitchen/Diner
- Bathroom
- Lounge
- Off Road Parking for several cars
- Landscaped rear garden



Offers in the Region Of £195,000



Ashtree Road, Pelsall

- Three Storey Three Bedroom Period Property
- Sympathetically Refurbished
- Superb Kitchen/Conservatory
- Master Bedroom with En-Suite
- Many Original Features
- Detached Garage
- Sought After Pelsall Village Location



Offers in Excess of £190,000



Meadow Street, Walsall Town

- IMPOSING THREE STOREY NEW BUILD
- FOUR BEDROOMS
- TWO EN-SUITE
- KITCHEN/DINER
- LOUNGE
- FRONT & REAR GARDENS

Guide Price £200,000



Wilkes Avenue, Walsall

- Traditional Detached Property
- Two Reception Rooms
- Side Garage
- Driveway
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Close to King Charles Primary School
- Great Potential to Improve/Extend
- Located Close to M6 J10



Offers in the Region Of £165,000



Lord Street, Walsall

- No Upward Chain
- Queen Mary's & Blue Coat Schools Nearby
- Several Primary Schools locally
- Two Reception Rooms
- Garage
- Kitchen/Diner
- Delightful Rear Garden
- Viewing Essential



£165,000




Dunnerdale Road, Clayhanger

- No Upward Chain
- Off Road Parking
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Cul-de-Sac Location
- Fitted Kitchen & Dining Area
- Conservatory
- Three Bedrooms
- Planning Permission Previously Granted



Offers in the Region Of £165,000



Coppice Road, Walsall Wood

- Spacious Detached Bungalow
- Superb Conservatory
- Low Maintenance Rear Garden
- Potential to Convert Garage to 3rd Bedroom/Granny Flat
- Ample Off Road Parking

Offers in Excess of £160,000

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Peolsford Road, Pelsall

- Three Bedroom Semi
- Extended
- Two Reception Rooms
- Fitted Kitchen/Diner
- Downstairs W.C.
- Utility
- Family Bathroom
- D. Glazing & G.C. Heating

Offers in the Region Of £160,000

Mayfields Drive, Brownhills

- Extended Modern Family Home
- Sought After Cul-De-Sac Location
- Superb Refitted Breakfast Kitchen
- Lounge
- Dining Area
- Refitted Family Bathroom
- Master Bedroom with En-Suite
- Useful Loft Space

£155,000

Bloxwich Road, Walsall

- No Upward Chain
- Four Bedrooms (En-Suite to Master)
- Two Reception Rooms
- Off Road Parking
- Car Port & Side Access to Rear Garden
- Gas Central Heating & Double Glazing

£150,000



Waters Keep, Walsall

- Light and Airy Lounge
- Spacious Kitchen/Diner
- Downstairs W.C.
- Rear French Doors
- Three Spacious Bedrooms
- Family Bathroom
- Useful Storage Space
- 10 Year NHBC Warranty

£143,995



Chester Road, Shire Oak

- Superbly Extended Mid Town House
- Porch
- Impressive Extended Kitchen/Diner
- Modern Bathroom
- En-Suite to Master
- Generous Rear Garden

Offers in the Region Of £135,000

Greenfields Road, High Heath

- No Upward Chain
- Refitted Kitchen
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Off Road Parking
- Garage
- Popular High Heath Area
- Viewing Essential
- Great School Catchment
- Delightful Rear Garden

Offers in the Region Of £145,000

REDUCED

Coppice Road, Walsall Wood

- Well Presented Period Style Semi
- Off Road Parking
- Delightful Rear Garden
- Two Reception Rooms
- En-Suite to Master Bedroom
- Breakfast Kitchen
- Open Fields to the Rear
- Viewing Essential
- Sought After Location
- Great School Catchment

Offers in the Region Of £129,950

Yorkshire Grove, Walsall

- Immaculately Presented
- Modern Semi Detached
- Sought After Jubilee Gardens Development
- Guest Cloakroom
- Open Plan Kitchen/Living Room
- Two Double Bedrooms
- NHBC Warranty

Offers in Excess of £125,000

Dartford Road, Bloxwich

- Superbly Presented & Extended Semi-Detached
- Block Paved Driveway
- Porch
- Ground Floor WC
- Laundry Room
- Workshop to Rear
- Three Bedrooms

Offers in the Region Of £125,000

Hunter Crescent, Bloxwich

- Superbly Extended Semi-Detached
- Pleasant Lounge
- Extended Breakfast Kitchen
- Refitted Bathroom
- Three Bedrooms
- Off Road Parking

Offers in the Region Of £125,000

Ingledeu Close, Walsall

- No Upward Chain
- Off Road Parking
- Garage
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Sought After Location
- Many Reputable Schools Nearby
- Transport Links to Wolverhampton & Walsall
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing

£125,000

Deepmore Avenue, Walsall

- No Upward Chain
- Corner Plot
- Off Road Parking
- Refitted Bathroom
- Modern Kitchen
- Ground Floor WC
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Ideal First Purchase

£120,000

Waters Keep, Walsall

- Light and Airy Lounge
- Spacious Kitchen / Diner
- Downstairs W.C.
- Rear French Doors
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Family Bathroom

£119,995

Seeds Lane, Brownhills

- No Upward Chain
- Potential for Improvement
- Block Paved Driveway
- Single Detached Garage
- Ground Floor WC
- Two Double Bedrooms
- First Floor Shower Room
- Delightful Rear Garden

Offers in the Region Of £120,000

Poplar Road, Brownhills

- Spacious Mid-Terrace
- No Upward Chain
- Off Road Parking
- Two Reception Rooms
- Fitted Kitchen
- Refitted Bathroom
- Three Generous Bedrooms
- Utility Area

£120,000

Hawbush Road, Leamore

- Superb Kitchen/Diner
- Utility Room and Guest WC
- Porch
- Spacious Lounge
- Off Road Parking
- Delightful Rear Garden
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing

Offers in the Region Of £115,000

Irvine Road, Bloxwich

- THREE BEDROOM SEMI DETACHED
- CORNER PLOT WITH LARGE REAR GARDEN
- GARAGE TO REAR
- TWO RECEPTION ROOMS
- FITTED KITCHEN
- LUXURY BATHROOM

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- Breakfast Kitchen
- Two Double Bedrooms
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- Great School Catchment Area

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Buxton Close, Bloxwich

- No Upward Chain
- Sought After Lower Farm Estate
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- Two Reception Rooms
- Delightful Front & Rear Gardens
- Three Bedrooms

Offers in the Region Of £105,000

Mulberry Road, Bloxwich

- Two Bedroom Modern Town House
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- Fitted Modern Kitchen
- Family Bathroom
- Rear Garden
- Off Road Parking
- Viewing Essential
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- Great School Catchment Area

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Lapwing Close, Watermead Grange

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- Two Reception Rooms

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- Landscaped Rear Garden
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- Double Glazing
- Viewing Essential
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Lichfield Road, Walsall

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- Desirable Location
- Close to Walsall Town Centre
- Communal Parking
- Delightful Communal Gardens
- Garage

Offers in Excess of £90,000

Shannon Drive, Brownhills

- Well Presented Starter Home
- Cul-De-Sac Location
- Kitchen/Diner
- Lounge
- Off Road Parking to the Fore
- Low Maintenance Rear Garden
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing
- Viewing Essential
- Great Transport Links

£95,000

Field Road, Walsall

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- Two Reception Rooms
- Extended Breakfast Kitchen
- Bathroom
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Rear Garden
- Close Proximity to Bloxwich High Street
- Ideal First Purchase

Offers in the Region Of £94,950

Basalt Close, Walsall

- Modern Town House
- Cul-De-Sac Location
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Fitted Kitchen
- Lounge/Diner
- Off Road Parking

Offers in the Region Of £95,000

Revival Street, Bloxwich

- No Upward Chain
- Ideal First Purchase
- Refitted Kitchen
- Wet Room
- Gas Central Heating
- Delightful Rear Garden
- Viewing Essential
- Double Glazing

Offers in the Region Of £85,000

West Street, Bloxwich

- No Upward Chain
- Two Reception Rooms
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- Ground Floor Bathroom
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Gas Central Heating
- Rear Garden
- Double Glazing

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AUCTION TUESDAY 15th DECEMBER 2015



WOLVERHAMPTON, 140 MERRIDALE ROAD

Imposing Detached Residence
"In & out" entrance drive, Porch, fine Reception Hall
large through Lounge, Study / Sun Lounge, 21ft Dining Kitchen, Utility, fitted
Cloakroom, Four Bedrooms, one en-suite, magnificent house Bathroom,
33ft Garage, Rear Garden with gazebo. EPC: E.46
Guide: £270,000 / £290,000

VIEWING
FRIDAY & SATURDAY, 27th & 28th November @ 10.00 a.m.
WOLVERHAMPTON



130 THE LINDENS, NEWBRIDGE

Easy access to City Centre
Second Floor purpose built Flat
Spacious accommodation with Double
Glazing
Private Hall, 14ft Lounge, Dining Kitchen,
Two Double Bedrooms, Bathroom
Garage. EPC: F.31

Guide: £48,000/£53,000

VIEWING
FRIDAY & SATURDAY
27th & 28th NOVEMBER @ 11.15 a.m.



WOLVERHAMPTON 9 COALWAY GARDENS, MERRY HILL

Pleasant residential cul-de-sac –
Well appointed Detached Bungalow, Double Glazing and Central Heating
Fully enclosed Porch, wide Entrance Hall, Lounge with patio doors to Garden,
well appointed Kitchen, Rear Hall, Utility, Two Double Bedrooms, Bathroom,
Garage, separate Workshop, attractive Gardens. EPC: D.61
Guide: £138,000 / £143,000

VIEWING:
FRIDAY & SATURDAY, 27th & 28th NOVEMBER @ 12.00 noon



WOLVERHAMPTON 32A BIRCHWOOD ROAD, PENN

First Floor Flat in a popular residential area
Canopy Porch, impressive 14ft Lounge,
Breakfast Kitchen, Pantry
Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Garage and
Garden. EPC: G.5

Guide: £50,000 / £55,000

VIEWING – Please Note: Access at rear via
Ryecroft Avenue
FRIDAY & SATURDAY, 27th & 28th
NOVEMBER @ 11.00 a.m.



WOLVERHAMPTON 71 OWEN ROAD, PENN FIELDS

Large Mid Terraced House with Gas Central
Heating
Enclosed Porch, Hall, Lounge, Dining Room,
Store, Kitchen, Utility, GF Bathroom,
Three Double Bedrooms. EPC: TBA
Garden to rear

Guide: £53,000 / £58,000

VIEWING
FRIDAY & SATURDAY, 27th & 28th
NOVEMBER @ 10.30 a.m.



WOLVERHAMPTON, 419 STAFFORD ROAD, OXLEY

Investment Property
Detached Bungalow, prominent position
Spacious accommodation, Gas Central Heating
Enclosed Porch, wide Hall, 20ft. Lounge, Din-
ing Room, Two Verandahs, Kitchen, Store
Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, 14ft. Loft Room
Garage, off-road Parking, attractive Garden,
EPC: TBA

Please Note: This property is offered subject to
a Life Tenancy with no passing rental
Guide: £58,000 / £63,000

VIEWING
FRIDAY 27th NOVEMBER @ 2.30 p.m.

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@ 6.30 p.m.**

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PLEASE NOTE: Viewings are at the times specified so, should you arrive late, you may find your viewing time is limited or that we have moved on in order to maintain the time schedule.

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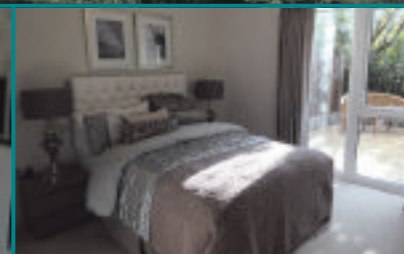
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The Chronicle Thursday, November 26, 2015

DARLASTON



HERBERTS PK RD, DARLASTON
Two Bed Mid Town House Having Porch, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Ground Floor W.C., Verandah, Utility, Family Bathroom, C/ Heating, Majority D/ Glazing, Front And Rear Gardens. Ideal BTL Or FTB

£75,000

WILLENHALL



SLATER ST, WILLENHALL
Three Bed End Town House Having Lounge, Modern Fitted Kitchen With Appliances, Downstairs W.C., Conservatory, Family Bathroom With Shower, D/ Glazing, C/Heating, Off Road Parking.

£84,995

NEW INVENTION



SQUIRES GROVE, W-HALL
Modern Two Bed First Floor Apartment Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge With Juliette Balcony, Modern Fitted Kitchen, Master Bedroom With En-Suite, Family Bathroom, D/ Glazed & E/Heating.

£87,995

LANE HEAD



MILL LANE, WILLENHALL
Two Bed End Terrace House Having Entrance Hall, Lounge, Spacious Kitchen/Diner And Refitted Family Bathroom. The Property Also Benefits From Gas C/H, UPVC D/G, Rear Garden And Off Road Parking.

£90,000

BEECHDALE



NAPIER RD, WALSALL
Refurbished Three Bed Town House Comprises Of Dining Room, Rear Lounge, Fitted Kitchen With Integrated Appliances, Bathroom & Separate W/C. UPVC D/ Glazing, C/ Heating And Private Rear Garden.

£90,000

WILLENHALL



HARPER ST, WILLENHALL
REDUCED PRICE
Two Bed Town House Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Fitted Kitchen With Integrated Appliances, Ground Floor W/C, Good Sized Lounge, Family Bathroom, D/G, C/H.

£94,995

WILLENHALL



BLOXWICH RD SOUTH, W-HALL
Two Bed Semi Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen/Diner, Family Bathroom, UPVC Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Front & Rear Garden & Driveway.

£100,000

SHORT HEATH



COLTHAM ROAD, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Town House Comprises Of Porch, Entrance Hall, Lounge Opening Into Dining Room, Extended Kitchen And Modern Refitted Shower Room. The Property Benefits From UPVC D/G, G/C/H And Garden.

£105,000

BENTLEY



EDINBURGH AVE, WALSALL
Two Bed Semi. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge/Diner, Kitchen & Ground Floor W.C., 1st Floor Bathroom. D/G & G/C/H. Off Road Parking To The Front & Enclosed Garden To The Rear.

£110,000

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Two, One Bedroom Flats Comprises Of Front Entrance Door, Double Bedroom, Lounge, Modern Fitted Kitchen, Modern Fitted Bathroom With Shower. Both Flats Also Benefits From UPVC D/G And G/C/H Throughout.

£120,000

BRACKENDALE ESTATE



STROUD AVENUE, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Mid Town House Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Refitted Kitchen, Lounge, Conservatory And Ground Floor WC, Family Bathroom. UPVC Double Glazing And Gas Central Heating. Garage To The Rear.

£124,995

NEW INVENTION



CONWAY CRES, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Semi Having Entrance Porch, Inner Hallway, Through Lounge/Diner, Play Room/Study, Fitted Kitchen, Ground Floor WC, Family Bathroom, UPVC D/G, Gas C/H, Garage.

£129,995

SHORT HEATH



RIDING WAY, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Comprises Of Porch, Hallway, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Dining Area, Ground Floor WC, Study/Utility Room, Family Bathroom, G/C/H, Majority D/G And Garage.***CASH OFFERS ONLY***

£129,995

WILLENHALL



HARROWBY PLACE, W-HALL
Three Bed Semi Comprises Of Entrance Hallway, Lounge/Diner, Conservatory, Fitted Kitchen, Re-Fitted Shower Room. The Property Also Benefits From Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating Throughout.

£137,000

KINGFISHER ESTATE



WELLAND GROVE, W-HALL
Three Bedroom Detached Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen, Family Bathroom. D/ Glazed, G/C/H. Gardens To Front & Rear, Driveway & Garage.

£145,995

FURZEBANK



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Extended Three Bed Semi Detached Bungalow Which Comprises Of Entrance Hallway, Good Sized Lounge/ Dining Area, Fitted Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Shower Room, D/ Glazing, C/ Heating, Driveway & Private Rear Garden.

£169,950

WILLENHALL



BILSTON LANE, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Detached. Comprises Of Porch, Hall, Guest W.C., Lounge, Spacious Kitchen/ Diner, Veranda & Family Bathroom. Maj D/G. G/C/H. Garden To Fore. O/R/P. Extensive Gardens To Rear.

£185,000

SHORT HEATH



BLOXWICH RD NTH, W-HALL
Detached Three Bed Having Entrance Porch, Hall, Lounge With Inglenook Fireplace, Separate Sitting Room, Conservatory, Fitted Kitchen, Galleried Landing, Family Bathroom, Garage, D/ Glazing, C/ Heating.

£260,000

ASHMORE PARK



RUSSELL CLOSE, WEDNESFIELD
One Bedroom Flat Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Shower Room And Double Bedroom. The Property Also Benefits From Double Glazing & Central Heating.

£425 PCM

NEW INVENTION



LICHFIELD ROAD, WILLENHALL
Two Bed Flat Comprises Of Entrance Hallway, Lounge, Modern Breakfast Kitchen And Modern Family Bathroom. The Property Also Benefits From UPVC Double Glazing And Electric Wall Heaters.

£450 PCM

WILLENHALL



BLOXWICH ROAD SOUTH, W-HALL
Two Bed Terrace Comprises Of Reception/Dining Room, Spacious Breakfast Kitchen, Ground Floor W/C And Modern Family Bathroom. The Property Also Benefits From G/C/H And Majority D/G.

£450 PCM

DARLASTON



RICHARDS STREET, W-BURY
Three Bed Terrace Comprises Of Two Reception Rooms, Fitted Kitchen, Rear Hall, Family Bathroom With Shower. The Property Also Benefits From UPVC Double Glazing And Gas Central Heating Throughout.

£495 PCM

ALUMWELL



WOODWARDS PLACE, WALSALL
Three Bed Terrace Property Benefits From A Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Large Storage Cupboard, Ground Floor W.C., Family Bathroom, Gas Central Heating. Outside There Is Off Road Parking To The Front And A Large Garden.

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What lies beneath is what impresses

By John Griffiths

There's a new supermini on Britain's roads but you won't have much difficulty in spotting its origins.

But make no mistake: SEAT's new Ibiza may not look too much different on the outside, but underneath it's a very different story.

After all, the sporty shape was originally conceived by a former chief designer for Lamborghini and its sculpted lines remain modern and distinctive. There's an old saying 'if it ain't broke ...'

Instead the company listened to customers and blew its budget for this latest makeover on new, upgraded interiors, a great deal of new technology and the introduction of considerably more efficient engine options, bringing fuel and tax savings for owners.

There's also a new speed sensitive power steering system and much-revised suspension, damper and anti-roll bar settings which have significantly sharpened up handling while also resulting in a smoother, quieter ride. There's a range of customisation options for those who want their car to stand out visually.

Prices start at £10,000, rising to £18,035 which, like for like, still manages to undercut big name rivals which don't have the advantage of offering three body styles - three door couple, five door or sports tourer (estate). There are seven trim levels and ten engine options - seven petrol and three diesel - six of which are completely new.

The entry level engine in the cheapest version produces 75ps and 95Nm of torque, drives smoothly and feels a little more peppy on the road than its 14.3 second 0 to 62mph time suggests. Official average fuel consumption at 54.4mpg wouldn't be out of place with many a smaller, lighter city car.

But the same engine in the turbocharged Ecomotive version is rated at 95ps, with 160Nm of torque which cuts nearly four seconds off the 0 to 62mph sprint time and yet its official fuel average is a diesel-like 68.9mpg and lower CO2 emissions of 94g/km.

The top specification FR version gets even more power, 110ps and a hefty 200Nm of torque, but still with an official fuel average of more than 64mpg and a low 102g/km.

Transmission

The FR, which costs from £15,690 in the three-door model, is also unusual for a 1.0 litre car in that it is available with the proven DSG dual clutch automatic transmission. Quicker and smoother than even a manual gearbox, it also has the option of manual control of the six ratios via paddles behind the steering wheel. With a 0 to 62mph sprint time of 9.3 seconds, it is remarkably quick for a 1.0 litre car and particularly smooth.

Other petrol engine options include 1.2 litre units with 90 and 110Ps, a 1.4TSI with 150Ps of power and 250Nm of torque.

All three diesel engines are 1.4 litres, with outputs of 75, 90 (available with the DSG transmission) and 110PS. The 75Ps version is fitted to the Ecomotive version, with official average fuel consumption of more than 83mpg and a CO2 rating now down to 88g/km: well below the current 100g/km free VED benchmark. The Ecomotive has a very respectable 210Nm of torque, making it very driveable with plenty of pulling power at low revs.

The entry-level E model comes with a centre touch screen media system, four airbags, hill hold control, a tyre monitoring system, stability control and emergency brake assist, a folding rear bench seat, electric front windows. Next up the S A/C adds air conditioning along with electric adjustable and heated door mirrors, an upgraded audio and hands-free phone system, a split/fold rear seat and remote audio and phone controls on the steering wheel.

Further up the range, you add features such as alloy wheels, a larger touch screen with an improved range of functions, LED running lights, front fog lights with cornering function, cruise control, parking sensors, satnav, and a driver tiredness warning. The FR is the top specification model, with the addition of sporty trim.

The new Ibiza has to hold its own in a crowded and competitive area of the market, but SEAT has hit the ground running with a wide range of engine, body styles its competitive pricing and relatively low running costs add to the appeal. All the new engines meet the latest EU6 emissions standards (with low CO2 ratings of between 88 and 120g/km) and insurance ratings range from 8E to 18E (out of 50).

And while its looks may not have changed much (colour pack options excluded) SEAT has added a raft of new technology and a more grown-up feel to the car, with significant improvements in refinement.

For many of us price is the deciding factor. But given a choice the FR, with one-litre turbo engine, DSG transmission and a combination of 64mpg and sub 10 seconds sprint time is a pretty remarkable machine even in the world of superminis.

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- rain sensing wipers
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- 2 x USB/HDMI connection
- 6 speakers
- rear parking camera
- climate control dual auto a/c
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Driving home Skoda message

By Ian Donaldson

I BROKE the most valuable Skoda in the world (it's insured for £250,000) before it had moved a single inch. Talk about feeling a proper idiot.

Still, at least I'd managed to sit in the cockpit of the car; a gorgeous looking open two-seater designed more for racing lightness than six-footers with size 12 feet.

And, while a pair of cheerful mechanics worked away under the bonnet to reattach the throttle cable dislodged by an over-enthusiastic right foot prod, I had time to glance over this miniature masterpiece, from a chassis made of masses of tubes to a skimpy body looking like a 1950's schoolboy doodle of the perfect racing car.

Evidence

For anyone who thinks Skoda has only ever made road cars with an emphasis on value, here is evidence that deep in the psyche of the Czech company once burned a desire to win on the track.

So, back in 1957 it unleashed a couple of fibre-glass-bodied roadsters in a racing programme that took them to modest successes on the other side of what was then a very heavy Iron Curtain.

Now, the one remaining Spider in running condition (and fresh from a £30,000 engine rebuild in the UK, where it now lives) is being used to punch home the message that Skoda has been around a long time, in one form or another.

Since 1895, to be precise, when a couple of keen cyclists began designing and building two-wheelers called Slavias, adding motors four years later and becoming Laurin and Klement (their surnames). The first car appeared in the early 1900s and then, in a merger in 1925, Skoda arrived.

Older readers will recall model names like Felicia and Favorit, attached to machines that lacked the panache of Western rivals, but were cheap to buy and run, and tough with it.

Then, in 1991 Skoda became the fourth brand in the Volkswagen group and it began quickly to



lose the budget tag, replaced with cars that happily pinched bits from dealer VWs to produce machines that were now properly modern and good value.

But back to the Skoda Spider, now mended and revving its little 1,098cc engine in prospect of a visit to the modest race track provided for us at Bicester Heritage, carved from 348 acres of a former 1920's RAF bomber station.

Now, if barely a litre sounds puny, it's worth pointing out that the engine bears little relation to anything you would have found in a roadgoing Skoda of the time – as its 92 horsepower output and the Spider's 125mph top speed testify.

It's also light; at 550 kilos much less than the weight of a Harley Davidson motorbike with chunky rider aboard.

So, the car will fly if provoked. Which, with rain falling in enthusiastic amounts and the track awash, I was not keen to do. Especially as my spectacles lacked windscreen wipers and my big

feet found it easier to operate two pedals at once rather than one.

Oh, and however hard you pressed the middle pedal, the drum brakes stayed asleep, only deigning to flicker an eyebrow of interest as your right thigh began to quiver with the effort of application. It did make lovely noises, though, as I crunched up and down the gears (housed in a gearbox between the rear wheels) and persuaded the rev counter to flicker round to a figure that gave a gentle taste of the Spider's potential.

The steering was a positive delight, with the thin, string-wrapped wheel feeding back an accurate description of the tarmac below. Which must have been welcome when the Spider was used in anger more than half a century ago.

No seatbelts, of course. No roll cage, no bodywork (to speak of) and almost no brakes.

Miroslav Fousek and Jaroslav Bobek, the two men who took the pair of Spiders to a one-two in Leningrad in 1962, I salute you.

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Toyota's RAV4 now available in hybrid

By James Parker

Toyota is introducing hybrid power to the RAV4 in one of the most significant changes to the model since it created the European compact recreational SUV market in 1994.

The new model range is now available to order in the UK, with a choice of powertrains which includes the 2.5-litre full hybrid, a new 2.0-litre D-4D diesel and a revised 2.0-litre Valmatic petrol with improved fuel economy and CO2 emissions. Both front-wheel and all-wheel drive versions are offered. Active 2.0 D-4D front-wheel drive. On-the-road prices from £23,695.

At the same time Toyota is upgrading equipment specifications across the board and introducing Toyota Safety Sense – a package of integrated active safety and driver assistance features – as an option on all versions of RAV4 beyond the entry-point model.

Toyota is offering customers more choice and improved equipment specifications with a new five-grade line-up that introduces Business Edition Plus trim and changes the flagship designation from Invincible to Excel.

The entry level Active grade features the new 2.0 D-4D diesel engine and comes equipped as standard with a wealth of extra equipment features. These include the Toyota Touch 2 multimedia system with touchscreen, six-speaker audio system with DAB radio, cruise control, sunglasses holder, shark fin antenna and leather steering wheel cover. This is an addition to current items including 17in alloys, LED daytime running lights, air conditioning, rear privacy glass and electric door mirrors.

The RAV4 Business Edition – also powered by the 2.0-litre diesel engine – gains front and rear underdrains. Elsewhere it retains its high-value specification, with highlights including Toyota Touch 2 with Go navigation and on-board connectivity system, dual-zone automatic air conditioning, front fog lamps, retractable door mirrors, automatic headlights and wipers, rear-view camera and an auto-dimming rear-view mirror.

The new Business Edition Plus is launched as a hybrid/ front-wheel drive-only grade and comes with LED front and rear lights, a power tailgate, keyless entry and push-button start.

Alloy

All three powertrains and front and all-wheel drive options are offered in Icon trim. Key additional features include 18in machined-finish alloy wheels, LED headlamps, combination leather and Alcantara upholstery, electrically-adjustable driver's seat (with power-adjustable lumbar support), heated front seats and an Alcantara dashboard finish. On these models the Toyota Touch 2 system is provided with an optional upgrade to Go status with satellite navigation and connectivity functions.

The Excel models adopt the full Toyota Touch 2 with Go package, plus leather upholstery, roof rails and front and rear parking sensors.

Toyota Safety Sense is available as an option (£695) on all versions of the new RAV4, apart from Active grade. The package of integrated active safety and driver assistance includes a radar-controlled Pre-Collision System that can detect both vehicles and pedestrians on the road ahead. This works in conjunction with a pre-collision brake and brake assist to alert the driver to the imminent risk of a collision, prepare the brakes to deliver extra stopping power and, if the driver fails to react, to initiate braking autonomously.

The same radar unit also equips RAV4 with adaptive cruise control, which helps the driver maintain a safe distance from the vehicle in front. Other features include road sign assist, which recognises principal motorway and major route signs and repeats on the TFT screen in the driver's instrument binnacle.

Camera sensors monitor the white lines of motorways and major dual carriageways to provide a lane departure alert, warning the driver if the vehicle strays out of its lane without the turn indicators being used. The same system also provides a new sway warning, detecting from irregular vehicle movements that the driver may be becoming drowsy. If it believes the driver's attention is becoming potentially unsafe, it will flash up a sway warning alert on the TFT screen with a coffee cup image, recommending the driver takes a break from the wheel.

Toyota Safety Sense is completed by automatic high beam, which maximises full-beam headlight operation. The system detects oncoming traffic and vehicles ahead and automatically clips the lights, returning them to full beam as soon as the road ahead is clear. This function can be switched off if the driver prefers to operate the lights manually at any time.

Two new exterior colours are available for RAV4: Blue Crush and Barcelona Red. Cabin trims are unchanged.

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Navara prices are released by Nissan

By Sharon Walters

Nissan has announced full pricing and specifications for the all-new NP300 Navara – the rugged, dependable and capable workhorse with crossover-style comfort and class-leading technology, which will propel the brand back to the top of the pick-up segment.

Available in Nissan showrooms nationwide from January 2016, the new model, which builds on Nissan's 80-year pick-up heritage, will be available in five distinct trim grades – Visia, Acenta, Acenta+, N-Connecta and Tekna – and will be priced from £18,376.

Customers of the all-new NP300 Navara will have the flexibility to tailor their vehicle so that it can meet the requirements of the toughest job or the most demanding of lifestyles. The pick-up can be specified with either a double cab or a king cab and a 190PS twin-turbo or 160PS single turbo version of the new 2.3-litre dCi engine.

There's also a choice of two or four-wheel drive and a six-speed manual or seven-speed automatic transmission.

Many of the new model's advanced safety features – including a number of first-in-class technologies – are incorporated across the range as standard. This includes forward emergency braking on all double cab models; driver, passenger, side, knee and curtain airbags; electronic limited slip differential (eLSD); hill start assist and hill descent control (on 4WD models).

Appealing

Developed with the aim of delivering Nissan crossover-style comfort and refinement to the pick-up sector, even entry-level versions of the NP300 Navara are competitively specified with an appealing array of on-board equipment.

Visia models, for example, feature manual air conditioning (4WD), five-link rear suspension (DC), Bluetooth telephone integration, steering wheel-mounted audio controls, an AUX socket for MP3 connectivity, a USB port, three 12v sockets, automatic headlights with 'follow me home', cruise control and speed limiter (DC).

Step up into the Acenta, and customers will enjoy a number of styling enhancements, including 16in alloy wheels and chrome exterior trim, as well as the Nissan Intelligent Key system with engine start/stop button and a five-inch HD full colour TFT screen.

Acenta+ meanwhile, adds the more powerful 190PS 2.3-litre dCi engine, 18in alloy wheels, automatic air conditioning with dual-zone climate control, rear colour reversing camera (shown in the rear view mirror), side steps, electric folding heated door mirrors and rear privacy glass.

Moving up the range, the new N-Connecta trim grade puts entertainment to the fore, with the addition of the NissanConnect 2.0 7in touchscreen satellite navigation and entertainment system. This incorporates features including DAB digital radio, a rear colour reversing camera, Bluetooth audio streaming, app integration and live traffic updates.

Topping the range, the Tekna – priced from £24,293 – adds Nissan's Around View Monitor, which uses cameras to give the driver a bird's eye view of the car, as well as rear parking sensors, leather seats with heated front seats, roof rails and LED headlights.

In addition, all models in the range benefit from a full manufacturer five-year/100,000 mile manufacturer warranty – providing additional peace of mind as standard.



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Kia deposit contribution	£1,200.00	36 monthly payments	£380.73	Excess mileage charge	14.9p per mile
Amount of credit	£20,000.00	One final payment (GFV)	£8,410.75		
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ANTIQUE, VINTAGE & COLLECTORS FAIR

UTTOXETER RACECOURSE
(SAT NAV ST14 8BD)
VIA STAFFORD RD/A449 & B5013
SAT/SUN 28TH & 29TH NOVEMBER
100+ STALLS INSIDE + OUTSIDE PITCHES
10AM - 4PM ADM.£1.50 CHILDREN FREE
PLENTY OF FREE PARKING
ANTIQUE FORUM
01782 393660 / 07921659798

ANTIQUE & COLLECTORS FAIR Every month. Codsall Village Hall, Sunday 29th November 9am-3pm. Call Brian: 07923 538178.

christmas events

ST MARYS CHRISTMAS FAYRE
at St Marys Parish Hall, Leveson Street, Willenhall, WV13 1DA.
Saturday, November 28, at 1pm.

markets

Darvaston Street Market
EVERY MON, TUES AND THURS
KING STREET 07889 975701

BESCOT SUNDAY MARKET
OPEN EVERY SUNDAY
Banks's Stadium, Walsall FC
WS1 4SA. FREE PARKING. J9 M6
07889 975701 All hard standing

3

Home & Services

furniture

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BFC FURNITURE
Open Everyday 10am-6pm
SAVE 50% DIRECT FROM FACTORY
DIVAN beds from £49. Mattresses from £29. Ortho mats from £69. Memory foam mats £79. Metal fashion bed frames - singles £49, doubles £69. Bunk bed frames £99.
MOBILITY CHAIRS
Choose from our unrivalled stocks in leather and fabric-many models to choose, saving up to 50% eg Roberto lift and tilt in leather was £899
HALF PRICE £349
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CONYNGE ROAD IND EST, GREAT BRIDGE RD, TAYTON DYK TRG. VISA OFF A461 2 MINS FROM NEW CO & TORY CARPETS
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ASH RECLAMATION new and used building materials, upvc doors and windows 01543 453222.

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4 Pets & Animals

pets corner

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1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with its Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree. Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

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6 Property

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equestrian corner

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5 Business & Farming

business opportunities

READERS are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering any obligations.

business directory

businesses for sale

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7 Jobs

building & construction

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full time - general

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The ideal candidate will hold all Domestic Gas Qualifications and have good IT & Communication skills.
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We are looking for a Warehouse Assistant to help aid our growth plans. You will be reliable, professional, punctual and can use your own initiative but work well in a small team.
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KS2 Teacher

Full Time permanent
MPR1-UPR3 (£22,023-37,496)
Required for Feb 2016



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Barcroft School is committed to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. The successful candidate will be subject to an enhanced DBS check. Visits to the School are warmly welcomed and encouraged

For further information and an application pack, please telephone/email the School office.

Tel: 01902 368132 or email
postbox@barcroft.walsall.sch.uk

Closing date: Friday 4th December
Interviews Thursday 10th December



EXPERIENCED CNC ROUTER / OPERATOR

required for a progressive precision engineering company based in Walsall. The ideal applicant would be fully conversant in the setting and operating of CNC routers. Experience of beam saws and other production equipment would be a distinct advantage but not absolutely necessary. Also required would be the ability to read and interpret drawings and set up tooling and programmes to operate the same. The applicant would need to be a team player with pride in the quality of their work and their work place. A competitive package is available for the right person.

EXPERIENCED

MANUAL MILLING SETTER OPERATOR

required for a progressive precision engineering company based in Walsall. The ideal applicant would be fully conversant with the setting and operating of manual milling machines and also have experience of working in a CNC led environment. They would need the ability to read and interpret drawings, be able to check their own work. The applicant would need to be a team player with pride in the quality of their work and their work place. A competitive package is available for the right person.

For the above positions please apply with a full CV.

In the first instance to:

RAYBURN PLASTICS LIMITED
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HGV Class 1 & Class 2 ADR Drivers

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Monday to Friday with occasional weekend work
Basic Salary, Overtime, Night Out & Bonus Scheme to be discussed at interview

To apply please send your CV to nnewton@chemtechwaste.com

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For small busy accident repair body shop to be working on cars & light commercials.
MUST have previous body shop experience.
Duties will include stripping/fitting body panels, panel repair work & prepping for paint.
Hours of work 8.00am to 5.30pm
Monday to Friday (44.5 hours)
Rates of pay £10.00 to £11.00 per hour negotiable depending on experience.
To apply ring 01922 632018 or email CV enquires@unipartwalsall.co.uk

MNA Media

USER GENERATED CONTENT

CO-ORDINATOR X 2

MNA Media, publishers of the Express & Star, Shropshire Star and associated weekly publications is looking for two UGC Co-Ordinators to join our editorial team.

Reporting to the UGC Editor the successful applicants will source and collate high quality user generated content for all MNA publications and online platforms. You will be able to demonstrate an excellent understanding of all aspects of social media with a proven ability of using this knowledge for research, promotion and engaging with users. Demonstrating a keen interest in both local and national news the successful applicants will monitor all forms of social media to obtain content which can be reproduced throughout our publications and online.

Candidates should be enthusiastic, versatile, creative and prepared to go the extra mile to obtain content for our titles. Excellent communication skills are also required to obtain contacts with social media contributors and bloggers. Experience using Photoshop would be advantageous.

Both roles involve shift working including evenings and weekend.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN APPLYING FOR ONE OF THESE ROLES PLEASE

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8

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Local Specialists



Bloxs make hard going of beating low Wulfs

Bloxwich 2 Old Wulfs 1
WITH both teams getting promoted into the West Midlands Premier league last season, many would have predicted this fixture as a clash of the lower teams in the league at the start of the season.

This prediction could not be further from the truth as Bloxwich started the match riding high at the top of the league whilst Old Wulfs struggle at the bottom of the table.

However, the difference in league positions would have been hard to notice in what turned out to be a very close match.

Bloxwich started well on what was a bitterly cold Sneyd pitch with Phil Ashcroft opening the scoring with yet another well-worked, short corner.

The home side then extended their lead with late starter Nathan Scaaccia scoring the second goal from an excellent John Morris cross into the opponents D.

Bloxwich unfortunately gave away a penalty stroke just before half time, giving Old Wulfs a lifeline.

The second half started off cagey and a nervy Bloxwich forward line could not finish off the game.

Bloxwich's defence held strong, despite going down to 10 men, with Ryan Mitford, Matt Whitehouse, Mark Azram and Jack Phillips creating a solid brick wall defence that Old Wulfs could not break through.

After a tough game, Bloxwich were ecstatic to be taking away three points against their rivals and hope to continue their run of good form against fellow league high fliers Bromsgrove next week.

Pelsall grab much-needed points in win

Pelsall 4 Heather St John 2
PELSALL Villa gained much-needed points with a 4-2 win over Heather St John in Midlands League Division One.

Ahkeen Rose struck for Villa after combining with Dan Aldred, but Heather took little time getting back into it, when Williams forced in a rebound after Daniel Mikrut parried a shot from Andy Reece.

However, Pelsall went in at the break with a 2-1 lead when Rose beat two defenders and finished with a shot into the top corner of the net.

Pelsall pushed to increase their lead in the second half and Callum Phillips saw his shot saved by Ben Allsop, who then denied Aldred.

But on 72 minutes Rose completed his hat-trick when he nipped between a defender and the keeper and rolled the ball into the net.

Pelsall made the points safe when Spencer Blackham made no mistake.

Heather got a consolation goal from a corner headed home by Reece.

Ikeme looks likely to be fit after cramps

WOLVES keeper Carl Ikeme is expected to be fit for Saturday's visit of MK Dons despite being nearly forced off with debilitating cramps against Ipswich.

Ikeme played in Swaziland and Nigeria during the international break and it appears the long travelling may have taken its toll.

However, Emiliano Martinez is a doubt as he bids to return from a thigh injury.

Argentine Martinez limped off during the 0-0 home draw with Burnley more than two weeks ago.

Boss Kenny Jackett said of his goalkeepers: "The physios are very reluctant to put a time frame on Emi because they're worried about a recurrence.

"He will be outside working this week and we'll see how he goes."

Pegasus flies along for the win

Pegasus Jrs 4 Wolverhampton SC 2
SPORTING started in dominant fashion and Phillips was soon in the thick of it denying both Westwood and Letford with one-on-one saves.

Letford then burst past the Pegasus back line and hit the post before Quarry should Have made it 1-0 as he fired wide.

Letford was again denied by the woodwork as he saw his header crash back off the crossbar before Phillips made another outstanding save from Westwood.

Sporting then hit the woodwork for a third time as Phillips produced another super stop from Letford but could only parry to Westwood and his effort hit

the inside of the post rolled along the goal line hit the inside of the other post and was cleared off the line by the Pegasus defender.

Sporting did get a break though as Quarry was brought down in the area and Westwood coolly converted the spot kick.

Phillips was again called into action with two more comfortable saves from distance as both Letford and Westwood tried their luck.

But Phillips again would not be beaten as he made a double save this time from a Westwood header and then a Cameron volley.

Sporting undid the hard work as five minutes before half time Pegasus' first effort on on goal saw

Pearson equalise after Stevens had saved his first effort.

In the second half, Sporting were caught on the break attacking a set piece and a long clearance saw Pearson sprint clear. He rounded Stevens and fired home. Pegasus then scored two goals in two minutes as a poor cross field ball from L Cain was intercepted and Pearson made no mistake to complete his hat-trick.

A minute later a volley from the edge of the area made it 4-1 which left Stevens with no chance.

Sporting weren't finished though as Letford headed home to finally beat a stubborn Phillips at last..

Walsall defeated in the first half

Worcester Wanderers 40 Walsall 14
WORCESTER Wanderers scored five tries which ensured them a match-winning interval lead.

This victory also moved them to the top of Midlands One West.

Walsall will be encouraged by their second half performance which saw them put continuous pressure on their opponents and score two tries.

The Wanderers secured their 33-0 interval lead as a result of some strong drives off their close range lineouts and scrums.

Their No.8 Jacob Saddington and hooker David Whiting proved to be very effective ball carriers.

While outside half Will Biggs distributed the ball well and converted five of his team's six tries.

The visitors also had their chances during the first half.

A superb 50 metre run by Dave Pitt should have resulted in a score. While half backs Luke Pittaway and Pitt tried hard to initiate attacks.

The hosts scored the first try of the half. It was Pitt that set up the first Walsall score as he ran round the Worcester defence before kicking ahead.

Powerful

The defence managed to stop the attack just short of the line. But the visitors produced a powerful scrum which saw No.8 Jeffrey Williamson going over for the try.

The visitors doubled their score within seven minutes.

Once again the attack was instigated by a strong scrum.

Williamson made good ground and then hooker Taric Tin made a strong burst.

The ball was moved quickly and fly half Connor Pitt found Weston with a well-timed pass.

The Walsall centre beat two defenders from 15 metres to score near the corner flag. He then put over his second conversion.

The United had a pleasing 29-7 victory over Worcester Wanderers.

Captain Mark Reeves scored their first try. Another score came immediately off the restart as No.8 Halil Gozukucuk made a powerful run. Laured Kalari then added to the score.

A 34-0 win for Walsall 3rds against Aldridge 2nds.

Tries for Brandon Sayce, Phil Stanley, Adam Knight, Mario Tamilio, Macdonald Formo and Anthony Perkins.

James Quigley kicked two conversions.

Toffees not so sweet for Villa



Kieran Richardson is given the runaround by Gerard Deulofeu down Villa's left

Everton 4 Villa 0
VILLA slumped to a heavy first defeat under Remi Garde in his second game in charge as braces from Ross Barkley and Romelu Lukaku condemned the Premier League basement boys to a thrashing at Everton.

Barkley put the Toffees ahead in the 17th minute, finishing at the far post when Brad Guzan

turned Gerard Deulofeu's effort his way.

Lukaku then headed home in the 28th minute, before poor Villa defending allowed Barkley to add another three minutes before half-time.

Lukaku notched his second just before the hour-mark, with Barkley and Deulofeu again involved on an afternoon the young

trio truly shone. While Everton boss Roberto Martinez will be delighted to see his team produce another impressive display after the 6-2 thumping of Sunderland last time out at Goodison Park, this was a hugely-concerning spectacle for opposite number Garde, whose side remain five points adrift of safety at the foot of the table.

Wood four-ce their way into next round

FA Vase Round 2
Walsall Wood 4 Holbeach United 1
WOOD'S entry into this season's competition saw them comfortably dispatch the high-flying United Counties League visitors to advance a step closer to Wembley.

The win was deserved but the visitors were always in the game until Wood sewed the game up on 65 minutes when a slide rule through ball by Max Black set up Joey Butlin to calmly fire Wood into the next round.

Defences were on top with the game condensed into the middle third of the pitch until on 20 minutes a lovely move in from the Wood left saw Corey Curritthers win a corner that was delivered to the near post for him to power a header home.

The Tigers nearly equalised from the kick off, Jake Clitheroe racing onto a ball into the right of the box to fire a rising drive over the near angle.

Three minutes later from a left wing corner Nick Jackson headed just over the bar.

Wood lost the ball in a right wing mix up from a throw in, Clitheroe playing a clever ball inside to set up Josh Ford to fire a first-time effort over the bar. Five minutes later a flowing left wing move saw Jor-

Football

dan Thomas find Lee Beeson in the D. He played the ball to Clitheroe on his right who switched play to the left hand post and Ford scored with a header back across the keeper.

On half-time a defensive mistake let in Clitheroe who raced for goal only to be fouled from behind just outside the D, Jamie Stevens firing the free kick over the wall and the bar.

Blazing

Wood came out all guns blazing at the start of the second half, pinning the Tigers back, on 49 minutes Curritthers made space on the right of the box, powered his way into the six-yard box and his vicious, low, near post drive had too much venom for keeper Rick Drury who got a hand to the ball but couldn't keep it out.

Later, the ever dangerous Clitheroe went on a right wing run, cut in along the byeline and his driven, low cross was cut out by Grant Beckett to deny Ford. Then four minutes later an intricate left wing move presented Stevens with a shooting

chance. From 30 yards he sent a first-time, low drive inches wide of the left hand post. Wood were living dangerously and Beeson hit a cross from wide right, Ford hitting an effort that deflected off Anthony Juxon and flew the wrong side of the post.

Having weathered the storm Wood went looking for the goal that would put the game safe, it nearly arrived on 63 minutes.

Harry Harris delivered a left wing free kick into the right of the box to pick out Curritthers. He beat his marker, crossed low across the face of the box, Max Black sliding in only inches away from applying the finishing touch.

The killer goal arrived two minutes later, a crisp move through the middle found Black in the centre of the D. His exquisite ball through the right of centre released Joey Butlin into the box he gave the advancing Drury no chance with a low drive.

On 75 minutes Jackson picked up a second yellow the game was over as a contest, but on 86 minutes substitute Ollie Gale raced into the left of the Wood box, pulled the ball back to Stevens who turned his marker and fired over.

Deep into injury time Dan Griffiths made no mistake with a trademark finish.

Cat has no lives left against Collingwood

Lichfield & Walsall District Football League Three

AFC Collingwood 3 AFC Cat 2; Bowman FC 0 Duke of Wellington 2; Three Crowns United 2 Paradise FC 3

Under 21s

AFC Red Star 18 Cannock Town 0; Barton United 2 Chasetown Sch. Reds 3; Chasetown Sch. Blues 3 Burntwood Dragons 1; Four Oaks Lions 1 Pelsall Villa Colts 6

DFL League Trophy

Group B Pelsall Villa Colts UHU 5 Walsall Athletic 8

Jack Donnelley Cup

Round One

Burntwood Town 2 W'ton Sporting 0; Burntwood Trident 0 Swan FC 3

Jack Donnelley Cup

Round Two

Oak Park Rangers 4 Walsall Phoenix 7 (aet & pen)

Lichfield Challenge Cup

Round One

Queens Head 7 Walsall Wheat-sheaf 3

Staffs Sunday Challenge Cup

Round Three

Betley Sunday 1 Dr Johnson 11; Pelsall Villa Colts Vets 3 HUF UK 2

Staffs SA, Kimberley Cup -

Round Three

Eximius Warriors 2 Burntwood DFC 4; KWD Sports 2 Trent Valley Rovers 5; Ollys 0 Scales FC 4; Wych Elm FC 6 Bowling Green FC 1

Lichfield Charity Cup

Round Two

Boney Hay 5 Anchor FC 4 aet

The Lockmen grab three in nine minutes

Willenhall 3 Wellington 2
WILLENHALL produced their best spell of football this season with three goals in a nine-minute burst to set up a 3-2 West Midlands Premier win over Wellington.

The Lockmen had conceded two goals against the run of play, the first after 19 minutes when Adam Newbury fired in low shot after a cross was not cleared, the second five minutes later when a break down the left saw Zac Sirrell receive the ball and he too fired hard and low into the corner.

The Lockmen took just three minutes into the second period to halve the deficit when substitute Callum Foster held off a defender and beat keeper Matt Asperley.

Just six minutes later, Adam Holliday picked up a loose ball near the centre circle and lobbed Aberley with a sensational finish.

Willenhall got what proved to be the winner three minutes later when sub Corey Pearce beat the keeper as the end of a twisting run.

Only hard work will save Villa, says the boss

ONLY hard work can offer Villa any hope of keeping their top-flight status, according to Villa boss Remi Garde.

The Frenchman saw his Villa side dismantled by Everton in a demoralising defeat on Saturday – two weeks after hopes had been raised by a battling draw against Manchester City.

But he insists his squad possess enough quality to win their unlikely fight for Premier League survival.

"I still think we have qualities in this team – and in the next game we have to show this," he said.

"There are a lot of games to play. We will fight for every point – and we will continue that against Watford this next weekend.

"We have to carry on working hard."

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team in first half
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sweet for Villa
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Graham may yet prove to be golden

Ipswich 2 Wolves 2
THE considerable Bakary Sako-shaped hole on Wolves' left wing has been filled by no fewer than seven players at one time or another this season.

Sheyi Ojo, Nathan Byrne, David Edwards, James Henry, Jed Wallace and Rajiv van La Parra have all auditioned for the role, while George Saville was a one-off stop-gap in the League Cup defeat at Middlesbrough.

With Jordan Graham, the eighth, you wonder if the part has finally been filled. Jackett has been incredibly reluctant to blood former Villa youngster Graham, despite some impressive performances for the under-21s.

The 20-year-old was snubbed for the pre-season tour of France, then played with the first XI for August's final pre-season friendly at Doncaster but, despite impressing and scoring, wasn't even on the bench when the league campaign kicked off.

Perhaps the move was psychological mind-play in a bid to keep Graham honest, and his feet on the ground.

If so, it has worked. He wowed during a prolific loan spell at League Two side Oxford and has returned eager to finally make his mark at Wolves.

And thrust into his debut in gold and black, he showed nothing but promise in what will be the abiding memory of a spirited performance at Portman Road.

Graham seemed full of nervous energy, but tempered that with composure, and flourished in the responsible role or corner-taker, a show of faith for a debutant.

He wasn't the only star on show though - Adam Le Fondre changed the course of this match with his best performance in a Wolves shirt.

Replacing David Edwards, Le Fondre set up Benik Afobe's equaliser.

Clubs will have to pay if they want Henry, warns Smith

BOSS Dean Smith has confirmed only a huge offer would tempt Walsall to part with Rico Henry.

The teenage starlet is believed to be interesting the likes of Manchester City, Arsenal, Liverpool and Tottenham.

But Smith revealed only a substantial offer will see the England Under-19s defender leave the Banks's.

"It's going to take a hell of a lot of money to take Rico away from this football club," Smith said.

"Every player has a price don't they? We all know that.

"But it would take a very big offer and I'm not sure he'd want to go at the moment as well.

"Despite all the clubs linked, nobody has approached the football club.

"He wants to keep developing and playing in first-team football games.

"He's got to keep progressing and developing and doing what he's doing."

Smith also revealed midfielder Sam Mantom is likely to feature for the reserves next week.

Isaiah Osbourne is now back in the gym after undergoing knee surgery.

Single goal enough to sink the Blues

Blues 0 Charlton 1
CHARLTON eased their way out of the Sky Bet Championship relegation zone with an excellent if unexpected 1-0 win over Blues.

Captain Johnnie Jackson scored the only goal of the game just after the hour-mark as Charlton made it back-to-back victories with their first away triumph of the season.

Blues surprisingly slumped to their fourth home defeat of the campaign and at no time did they look like repeating their 5-2 mauling of Fulham in their last outing.

It was significant that Blues were forced to

Football

draft in Nicolai Brock-Madsen for his first start because Clayton Donaldson was unavailable with a groin strain following his goalscoring exploits for Jamaica against Haiti in midweek.

They certainly lacked his goalscoring potential as Charlton, looking to build on their 3-1 win over Sheffield Wednesday, produced some promising play in the early stages to give Blues an early warning of a shock result.

Generally the home side had the upper hand for long spells but they could not capitalise on their

superiority against a dogged Charlton side who are slowly regaining their confidence.

Jacques Maghoma posed the first threat for Blues with a powerful low drive which was effortlessly scooped up visiting goalkeeper Stephen Henderson.

Blues attempted to swamp Charlton in the second period with Demarai Gray forcing a superb save from Henderson.

The best chance of the game fell to Maghoma, only for the former Burton player to drill his effort just wide of the far post.

It was Lookman who created the breakthrough for Charlton in the 61st minute.

BLADES SLICE SADDLERS LEAD

Walsall 1 Sheffield Utd 1
THERE has been an awful lot of football for Saddlers fans to enjoy this season.

The ruthless way new League One leaders Coventry were dispatched at the Banks's Stadium back in August.

And the performance of almost total dominance that saw Blackpool swept aside at Bloomfield Road are just two of many highlights.

But, despite what Sheffield United boss Nigel Adkins would have you believe, Walsall hit those heights and arguably surpassed them in the first half of this game.

Yet the Saddlers had to make do with only a point as the Blades escaped to Yorkshire with a draw.

At times, you could argue, Walsall's finishing could have been better. But, in truth, a cocktail of bad luck, outstanding goalkeeping and truly appalling refereeing display cost them a 13th victory of the campaign.

With Walsall having not played for a fortnight, it was the Blades who shaded the opening 10 minutes. From then on though, the Saddlers were rampant.

Creativity

George Evans was irresistible, Romaine Sawyers was full of creativity and in Milan Lalkovic and Kieron Morris Walsall had two wingers who had supporters on the edge of their seats every time they got the ball.

It was in the 20th minute when you first got an inkling it might not be the Saddlers' day when goalkeeper George Long excelled himself with an incredible triple save.

After initially stopping Morris' strike, the keeper managed to somehow block as Bradshaw followed up and then get back to his feet to push a Sawyers effort around the post.

By this stage, a rousing home support was getting frustrated with referee Geoff Eltringham for constantly giving Sheffield United soft free-kicks as they seemingly lost every 50/50 battle.

That frustration grew as Paul Downing and then Lalkovic saw efforts rattle the woodwork.

The Blades had no answers but the tempo Walsall had produced should have seen them at least three goals up at the break.



Tom Bradshaw celebrates with his team mates after scoring the opener against Sheffield United

And it was always going to be hard for them to maintain that dominance in the second half.

But Bradshaw grabbed his 10th goal of the campaign to deservedly put them in front.

That finally sprung the Blades into life with the game suddenly becoming end-to-end, largely thanks to the more direct threat that came following the introduction of Connor Sammon.

And the visitors had a huge shout for a penalty when Che Adams lifted the ball over Neil Etheridge as he burst through, only to be knocked off balance by the keeper.

Adkins said afterwards it was a penalty but Eltringham seemed intent on getting nothing right.

Minutes later, Sawyers was penalised for winning the ball with the softest of challenges on Paul Coutts. Yet Eltringham deemed it a foul and that set-piece eventually led to Jose Baxter drilling home.

A fast-and-furious finale saw both teams chase a winner.

But a special mention must go to Etheridge who produced two very good saves from Adams despite having had very little to do as United chased shadows.

With the game over, it was difficult to know whether to be pleased with Walsall's performance or disappointed.

Pics hold off late surge for the win

Colwyn Bay 1 Rushall 2
RUSHALL Olympic held off a late surge from Colwyn Bay to run out the winners in their battle on the Welsh coast.

A bright start from Rushall saw Kris Taylor's close-range effort blocked.

Then it was the turn of Jack Duggan whose header was easily saved, while Carl Palmer also fired over for the visitors keeping the pressure on within the first couple of minutes of the Evo-Stik Premier clash.

Both goalkeepers made good saves as Shaun Pearson kept out Luke Benbow's attempt and Dean Coleman produced an outstanding fingertip save to keep out Cory Williams.

The scoring was opened by Benbow who put the Pics 1-0 up on 16 minutes when he converted Alex Reid's cross at the back post to cap off a superb Rushall counter attack.

Rushall had chances to extend their lead before half-time but Benbow headed just wide before Taylor skimmed the bar with a curling effort on goal.

Benbow headed against the bar in the second half but Rushall did double their lead on 67 minutes when Reid nicked in, rounded Pearson and slotted home.

Duggan conceded a penalty which allowed John Marsden to halve the deficit with 10 minutes to play but Rushall held on for the win.

Colwyn Bay: Pearson, Denson, Matthews (Newton 72), Bell, Fagbola, Rodgers, Sumner, Boland (Reynolds 58), Holsgrove (Dowling 58), Marsden, Williams

Subs not used: Corbett, Lea
Rushall Olympic: Coleman, Wilkinson, Martin, Tolley, Duggan, Caines, Heath (Lavelle-Moore 77), Palmer, Benbow (Howell 77), Taylor, Reid

Subs not used: Delaney, Wright

Wood facing high flyers Alvechurch

BROCTON have been rewarded for reaching the third round of the FA Vase with a mouth-watering clash at Hereford FC's Edgar Street.

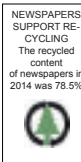
The Badgers, struggling in 20th place in the Midland League Premier Division, reached it with a 3-2 win at Coventry Sphinx on Saturday.

Hereford are top of Brocton's division and are on a run of 19 straight wins in all competitions.

Elsewhere, Walsall Wood were handed a tricky tie at home to high-flying Premier outfit Alvechurch. Wood's opposition sit third in the league and have only lost twice this season.

★★★

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Thursday, November 26, 2015



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